

# RACE TODAY

1976

DARCUS HOWE















# Race Today

JANUARY 1976 25p

BUSING IN EALING  
30 FAMILIES JOIN EAST END CAMPAIGN

## INDIA: TYRANNY AND RESISTANCE





# LETTERS

## BLACKS IN THE POLICE FORCE?

*Dear Race Today,*

I read with more than usual interest your excellent editorial on Blacks in the Police Force in the December issue. As is necessary on such a subject the editorial is based upon what are obviously facts and knowledge of the subject. Allow me to make a few remarks based on many years of consideration on this and similar subjects. I shall be as positive as possible.

1. The total force of the police is 21,302. My view is that in any discussion of the subject the aim of blacks should be to have at least 200 of their number in the force.

2. The Blacks in London constitute what can be called a community. They therefore ought to be represented in the police force with the view that they should represent that community. This means that the selection should not be haphazard but ought to be definitely organised, first by the police authorities themselves and secondly with the cooperation of substantial numbers of the community, black and white.

3. The aim should be on the part of the organisers, both official and unofficial, to make the police force more representative of the community not only in numbers but in action and in community considerations.

4. The recruits should get special training not only in the ordinary tasks of a police officer, but in their special responsibilities as the representatives of a group of people who are in constant conflict both with the police itself and with the white community

5. You say that the whites in London are now turning a very suspicious eye on the police force. The blacks who go into the police force should be educated to fill this gap in respect for the Metropolitan Police which you say whites have.

6. There should be from the beginning of this discussion impeccable guarantees as to the question of promotion and freedom to enter and participate in all aspects of police activity.

7. With the question of police activity there is inevitably linked the question of the magistracy. If many dozens of blacks enter the police force, and other members of the force begin to recognise that all avenues of promotion must be open to those with ability and experience; then it automatically follows that the magistracy will be open to those who are qualified.

I am writing here about large decisions which cannot be taken in advance. I am here proposing that the question be discussed freely and openly, unofficially to begin with, by people seen by official groups to represent all sections of the society. At the end of such a discussion the police authori-

ties should be able to decide what they want from the blacks and what the blacks should expect. They should then give guarantees, both actual and moral so that the conclusions arrived at will be honestly and scrupulously borne in mind.

That seems to me to be the attitude imperative at present. I do not believe that the huge advertising requests that blacks should join the police force should be dismissed or attacked. I do not believe, however, that blacks should rush to take what seems to be an opening for some sort of participation in important aspects of local life. I will state here what are some, (undoubtedly there are other) aspects of the advertisement and although other important ones may be brought forward I do not believe that young blacks should take this advertisement as an opening unless these points have been brought forward, discussed, and certain conclusions given and accepted by the community as a whole. I would like to conclude that all suggestions for discussion here stated, include, the white members of the police force.

Yours hopefully,  
C.L.R. James  
London.



# EDITORIAL

## POLICING SCHOOLS

In the metropolitan centres of Britain, the presence of police in the staff-rooms and in the playground, is no new occurrence. Increasingly, whenever education is discussed in official circles, the police are automatically present.

Following the battle on Bonfire Night in Chapel town, Leeds, between some 300 black youths and the West Yorkshire police force, a one-day conference of teachers took place on 'Education For a Multi-Racial Society' in the same city. They pressed the Minister present, Alex Lyon (Minister of State at the Home Office with special responsibility for immigrants) for a statement on policy towards the schooling of black children. Also present at the Conference, as though part of the furniture, were the police. The serious confrontation on Bonfire Night was mentioned once or twice, but the teachers view of it was that it was an unfortunate incident which improved schooling could prevent. This is hardly surprising since the teaching world has not only remained silent on the question of the police carrying out their tasks in the school environment, but with increasing frequency are openly collaborating with them.

It is no wonder then that in his letter this month (see page 19), Bob Dent, in criticising Chris Searle's views, finds the notion of 'radical teacher' as absurd as that of a 'radical policeman'. Nevertheless, endless soul searching and intellectual debate by teachers to define their role in the schools continues. Their behaviour at Primrose Comprehensive and Clapton Park Comprehensive, however, removes the debate from this abstract arena. Further, it shows a clearly defined area of struggle in schools—the conflict between pupils and teachers, brought out into the open not by teachers but by pupils, particularly black pupils.

When we call on teachers to take sides in this on-going struggle, we are asking no more than that they realise that their immediate and final material advantage lies in supporting the autonomy of the school pupil within school and outside it. In concrete terms it means supporting the pupils

against the assault of the police. It also means understanding the pupil's view of school as a factory in which they are graded into skilled and unskilled labour, disciplined into collective productive behaviour and in which they are forced into the routines they rebel against.

In *Race Today* we have followed the growth and perspective of a new organisation that has been added to the arena of parent involvement in schools. The Black Parents Movement was formed around the issue of police involvement in schools and their harassment of pupils outside it. Through two successful battles against the police and the courts, the parents have learnt that the role of parental organisations in school is active support for the rebellion of their children. The black section of school pupils have demonstrated through their behaviour that they can no longer look on schools as a way of getting better jobs. They view them as institutions of discipline which take their time and waste it. The BPM has followed the pupil's experience and, unlike previous parent's organisations in the black movement, can no longer see school as an instrument of social mobility.

The present economic climate and predictions for the future have made necessary a total change in the functions of schooling. If there are to remain institutions within which the young will spend their years before they enter the factory or the service industry, they must win for themselves the autonomy to decide the right to be there or not be there, and the right to say what they will do or learn while they are there. The Black Parents Movement has set the pace. Teachers must follow, and assist this movement or stand condemned by it.

Race Today Collective January 1976

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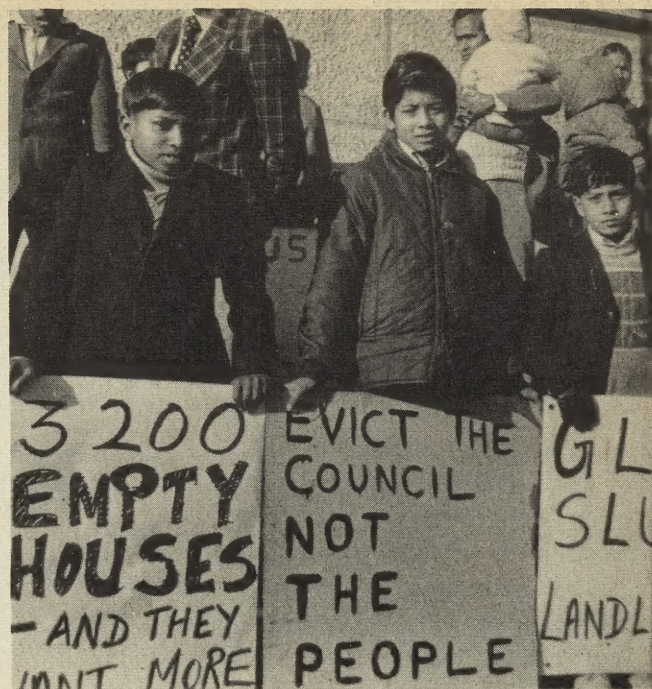
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# 30 FAMILIES JOIN EAST END CAMPAIGN



Andy Moye

In the last issue of *Race Today*, we reported the fight that some 40 Bengali families, together with the *Race Today* Collective and Tower Hamlets Squatters Union, were waging in the East End of London against eviction by the Greater London Council.

Now 30 other Bengali families (about 200 people in all) have joined the campaign. They live on Varden Street and Nelson Street - only a stone's throw from Old Montague Street.

The houses they occupy are owned by Tower Hamlets Council. So far, none of the families have received eviction notices, but as the houses on both streets are up for demolition under the present redevelopment scheme, this is only a matter of time. Living in the most extreme of slum conditions and under the constant threat of eviction, the families decided to join the campaign, made public by the tenants of Old Montague Street, who are demanding:

1. That all eviction notices be stayed until either the GLC or Tower Hamlets Council are able to provide alternative accommodation.
2. That they be rehoused within the E.1. area.

3. That when offered alternative accommodation they be given sufficient notice so that they can exercise their statutory right of viewing before acceptance.

Some of the houses on Varden Street and Nelson Street had been empty for as long as three years and were in an appalling state of decay when Bengali families first began moving into them around April 1975. Every family has had to spend money on making them habitable.

Recognising the vulnerability of these Bengali families, everyone from local hustlers to state officials take their cut or put obstacles in their way. For example, The Gas Board demand £50 deposit to supply gas when normally only £15 is required. In other cases they refuse to provide gas at all, unless 'the owners of the property' authorise it.

Support by the families of Varden and Nelson Street for the demands put forward by the Bengali tenants of Old Montague Street, demonstrate for the first time that, within this community, collective action around the issue of housing is not only possible but effective.

Maxim Paul Beresford Farrar (26), Henry Ronald Grey (17), Glenville Ashley Sheriffe (18), Clyde Sheriffe (16), Anthony Clancy Pyke (18), Derek Melrose Crossley (17), Claude Henrickson (15), Ernest Vernon Fleming (16), David O'Henry Cohen (21), Michael Walters (14), Eurie Stephenson Maurice (17), Keith Ian Gumbs (16).

They will next be appearing in Court on February 12th 1975. All have been granted bail on condition that they do not interfere with witnesses. Glenville Sheriffe, Grey and Pyke have an added condition that they must report twice weekly to the police station.

## BONFIRE TRIAL

Over 100 black youths turned up at Leeds Magistrates Court on November 12th 1975. They came to show their solidarity and support for the 12 youths who were arrested after a massive confrontation between the youths and the police in Chapel-town, Leeds on Bonfire Night November 5th. (See *Race Today* December 1975).

The 12, who are charged with offences ranging from threatening behaviour, malicious wounding, actual bodily harm and criminal damage, are:



# BUSING IN EALING RULED ILLEGAL

The Race Relations Board, in a report written by their assessor Professor Maurice Kogan, have come to the conclusion that the policy of busing black children in the Borough of Ealing is a discriminatory activity. The report finds the Ealing Education Authority guilty of contravening Section 2 of the Race Relations Act 1968.

In replying to the charge, Councillor Telfer of Ealing Council has challenged the Race Relations Board (RRB) to actually produce cases of discriminatory practice in busing children who do not need to be bused, and has offered to remedy such cases.

Entering the controversy, the Ealing Community Relations Council (ECRC) has now taken up the case and contentions that *Race Today*, as far back as January 1975, made out against busing. The Ealing CRC have put out a document agreeing with Professor Kogan's conclusions and suggesting, as we did in the article ( See *Who's Afraid of Ghetto Schools* *Race Today* January 1975) that remedying particular cases makes neither educational nor political sense, and that six new primary schools need to be built in Southall to accommodate the children that live there.

The RRB report estimates that the cost of busing children in Ealing is £200,000 a year on coaches alone, leaving out the cost of administration that the policy entails. The Ealing CRC concludes that the revenue thus spent should be transferred by government sanction to the fund of capital expenditure out of which new schools can legally be built. They point out that the money spent on building these schools would soon be offset by the savings on busing itself.

Both the Ealing CRC and the RRB are obliged to treat the problem of busing and any projected solution as simple manipulations of bureaucratic

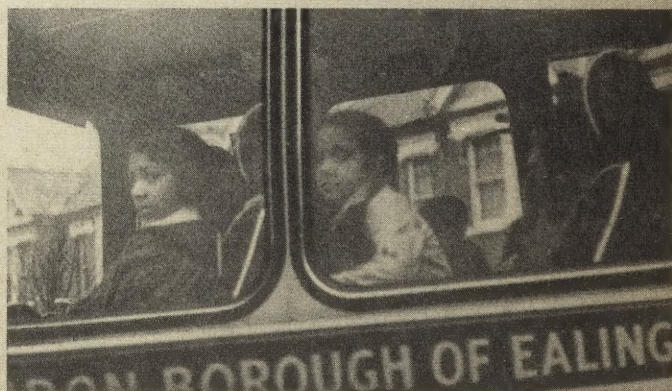
machinery. They see the problem as arising from an unsound theory of assimilation of blacks into the 'culture and lore' of Britain. We pointed out a year ago that Ealing Council have had these arguments before them for years. Their reluctance to build schools in Southall is not wholly unconnected with the availability of land in the area which would have to be bought from owners under compulsory purchase. We also pointed out then that the Ealing Council has available to it, apart from the busing money, a fund from the Department of Education and Science for school building but have consistently refused to take up this money.

The Ealing Authority, in the face of a challenge from black parents which followed the murder of a schoolboy, Mohammed Shakeel Malik on the 2nd of October 1974, reviewed their 'educational' criteria for busing soon after. Now it seems they have agreed with Professor Kogan's conclusion that busing is undesirable and causes physical inconvenience to the parents of the bused children as well as overcrowding in the schools to which they are sent.

In the year since our article was written, the pupil population of schools with concentrations of black youth have proved their desire, and their ability to use the school as a launching pad for their collective aspirations and their collective resistance to the way in which schools isolate and discipline youth. The end of dispersal is a victory for the black population of Ealing and Southall which has, through its determination and reactions changed the mind of Ealing Council as well as that of the CRC whose former policy supported busing.

## WHO'S AFRAID OF GHETTO SCHOOLS?

BUSING IN EALING



A political experiment often draws blood before its premises are re-examined. For a hundred years the state of America has been experimenting with what they call 'integration' for the black people of the USA. A population is moved from expectation to expectation, from pillar to post, from the stoops of the black streets of Boston to the white school on the outskirts, in search of equality and opportunity. America has produced an endless list of martyrs to the dream, lost but not least of them killed in the temper generated by the process of 'busing'.

On the 2nd of October '74, Mohammed Shakeel Malik, was killed in a fight between two gangs of youth, one from his own school, Brent High, and the other from the predominantly white Cardinal Wiseman.

horns in the predominantly Asian area of Southall. That day he was one of six Asian boys climbing into the bus that carried them home. They were set upon by the gang of white youths, could get no help from passers-by, and had to call for the ambulance themselves after Malik fell unconscious on the pavement.

Malik died that night without receiving consequences. No witness came forward to explain what exactly happened, and the coroner at the inquest concluded that 'although Malik had died of natural causes, he may have died if the incident had not taken place'.

Undoubtedly, his isolation in a white community contributed to Malik's death. Fights between gangs of youth are not unknown, whether the schools involved be black or white or mixed. Yet in Ealing, according to some teachers and officials,

which they find themselves characterised as the 'children off the bus' by other youth, and as the root of educational degeneration by fascist organisations like the National Front.

The Middlesex Council, Essex and the Ealing Gazette, two, two editions on the incident. The Ealing Community Relations Council wrote letters of concern. The Indian Workers Association wrote a letter of protest to the Chief Education Officer for Ealing. No effort has been made yet to express or give direction to the various school buses that have existed in the minds of Asian parents for a long time and stirred anew by the Greenford tragedy.

### Attacks on Busing

The policy of busing black children in Southall has been under mild fire from



## YOUTH HOSTELRY

Providing hostels to remove homeless black youth from the streets is gathering momentum in official circles. At the present time, certain Community Relations Councils are pushing their Borough Councils with some degree of success to provide premises and cash. And when such offers are made there is no shortage of willing takers from within the black community.

The Housing Group of Hammersmith Community Relations Council held its quarterly meeting on Thursday evening, November 27th at the Town Hall. The audience was a carefully invited range of council members, local voluntary associations, social workers, CRC members, and the Hammersmith police force in the person of Chief Inspector Lewis. The meeting was intended firstly, 'to draw attention to the growing problem of homeless young people in the London Borough of Hammersmith,' secondly, 'to support our Hostel Project for a 15/20 bed hostel,' and thirdly, to urge the Borough Council to take further action itself to combat this problem.'

To impress the Borough Council, the Housing Group invited along Mr Ron Phillips, a former member of the Universal Coloured Peoples Association, a now defunct militant black organisation of the 1960's. Today he runs a hostel for black youth in Manchester — the George Jackson Centre. Clearly his role was to advocate the desirability of these hostels, parading his own experiment as a shining example.

After speaking at some length about the background of homelessness in Manchester, he spoke of the George Jackson Hostel and its relevance in this situation. He described its philosophy as being 'socialist' — 'an attempt to blend communal living with the traditions of the West Indian extended family.' He saw the hostel as a base for building a network of self-help projects. For example, at the Centre there already existed an Educational Programme employing seven part-time black graduates, and a Legal Advice Panel with black solicitors. As a measure of his success with the hostel, he cited the fact that he was sent referrals from the Social Services and that Youth Workers organised visits for black youth outside of Manchester. He pointed out that the Black Women's cooperative had grown up around the hostel's activities. He wanted young blacks to be given more job opportunities and more opportunities to learn skills. What skills? What jobs? In the Department of Employment's (DEP) Gazette for November 1975, an article called 'Recent Trends In Apprenticeship Training' talks about 'the decline in the numbers of apprenticeship in any sector.' The reasons they give turn on the fact that, due to technical changes in industry, the demand for skilled labour has become less and less.

He ended his talk by saying that money has to

be given to grass-roots black organisations to deal with the problem. 'Free them from control, committees and expertise,' he said, 'no matter how much money is spent.'

In the discussion that followed almost nothing was said again about black youth. None had been invited and, therefore, none were present to give their point of view. It appeared there was no opposition from whites present to the hostel project and the discussion became a competition as to who was doing the most, what and where.

Seen in a wider context, the race to contain and defuse the rebellious mass of black youths is on in the inner cities. All kinds of programmes are being paraded as solutions, staffed by an all-black cast, as sections of the black community are creamed off to do the dirty work. Hostels too have given the police a new terrain on which to operate, as the raids on Harambee House, Birmingham, and Melting Pot, London, in July this year showed. No doubt black youths will continue to use them whenever they are provided, but only as a base from which to further organise their rebellion.

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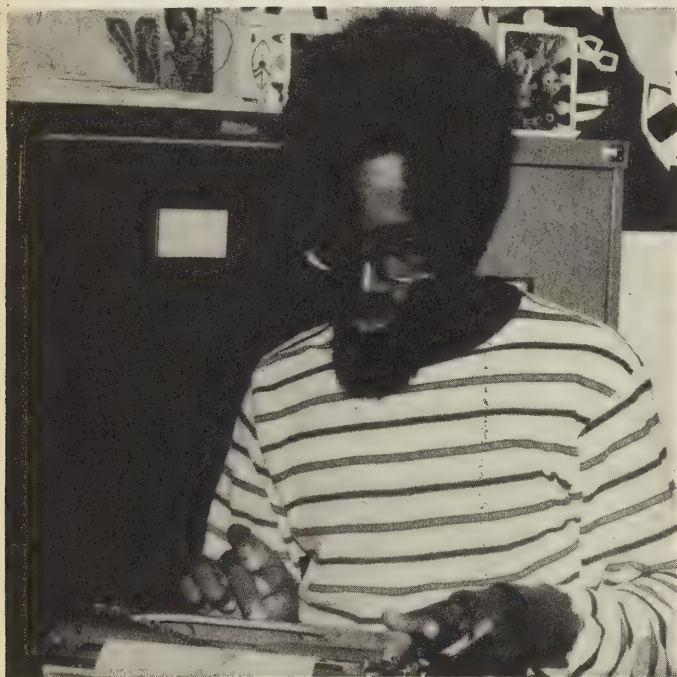
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### WALTER RODNEY VISITS LONDON

Walter Rodney, the Guyanese historian, visited London in December. He came as a representative of the Working People's Alliance (WPA) to mobilise support for them. Formed in November 1974, the Alliance is made up of both African and Indian political organisations, and as such represents a break from party/racial politics which, up to now, has divided the society.

At a meeting in London, he outlined briefly some of the present political developments in Guyana, but concentrated mainly on the work of the WPA. The present international economic recession, he said, is having severe consequences for the working class. The Burnham regime is exploiting this situation by ensuring that the little work that is available goes only to faithful government supporters. Civil Servants are asked to contribute to the ruling party's funds and records are kept of those who refuse to co-operate.

The Working People's Alliance sees its major function as political education and the self-organisation and unity of the Guyanese working class. The Alliance works with the main groups of productive workers — cane farmers, sugar workers

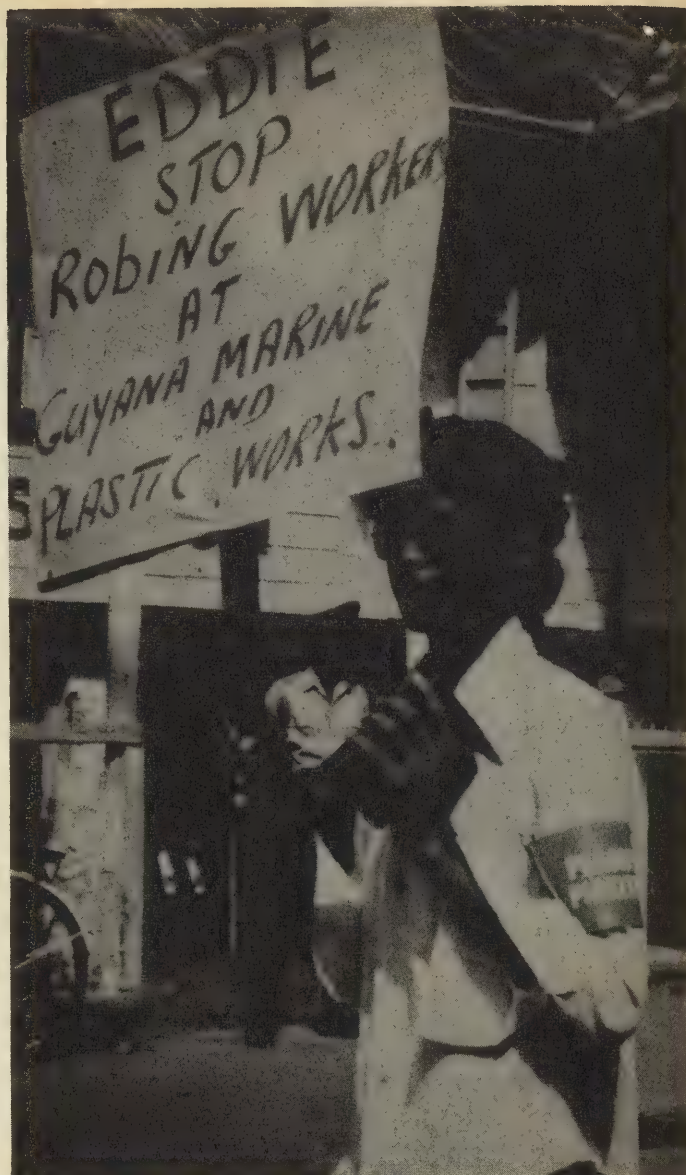
rice farmers and bauxite workers. He pin-pointed one of the major difficulties of the WPA as its survival in the repressive atmosphere of Burnham's Co-operative Republic. Their broadsheet, *Day Clean*, the only independent paper in Guyana, is hampered by anti-press laws. It faces 17 charges for infringing the Publication Acts. Recently they have put forward their short-term programme of "immediate demands to oppose unemployment and under-employment, underpayment and the neglect of the working people including women workers and the old people":—

1. There must be a national minimum wage above the starvation level. The present government minimum wage is now a starvation wage. It must go (See Two).
2. All minimum wages must be tied by escalator clause to the cost of living index. As cost of living rises, the minimum wage must rise also. Pension must be tied in the same way. The escalator means that if the C.O.L. rises, wages and pensions must rise by the same amount.
3. Present old age pensions of \$13 (village) and \$16 (towns) now paid to our elders at age 65 must be at least doubled now. Public assistance payments must be doubled too. The unemployed and old age pensioners must be exempted from all local rates and taxes and house rents.
4. A cost of living allowance for all workers and pensioners to pay for increases in cost of living and keep real wages from falling more.
5. Family allowances to each family on a sliding scale if the family income falls below a certain number of dollars per head per year. There will be an upper salary limit. Salaries above that should get no family allowance.
6. Guaranteed minimum nutrition budgets for all children.
7. Unemployment allowance for all unemployed persons, under the article of faith, "every citizen has the right to work." This must apply to all citizens at the age of 16. This will reduce farm stealing, street robbery and house robbery.
8. Payment of wages by cheque to defeat all enterprises suspected of forcing employees to sign for more than they receive. Under such a law workers do not have to sign for more than they receive.
9. Special cut rates for workers travelling to work on state transport, not above 24c per mile. Free travel for students on state transport.
10. The shameful national insurance service benefit of \$100 to pay for a funeral must be trebled now.
11. A minimum wage at once for all Domestic Workers as promised by the PNC since 1955. Those dismissed by their employers must be given state unemployment benefits while unemployed.
12. Recognise GAWU to enable workers on sugar estates to bargain freely with their British employers.



yers.

13. A new deal for Cane Farmers. Raise their price per ton to the level of Trinidad. Make the National Canefarmers Committee democratic.
14. Stop tampering with the people's food, as in the case of adding 30% cassava flour in white wheat flour.
15. End financial exploitation of house loan borrowers, stop \$500 development deposit on sugar lands housing schemes. Stop *all betrayal* of the 1973 land rebellion against feudal capitalism Land to landless squatters;
16. Return rice lands to sugar workers' coop at enterprise. Return Bachelors adventure lands stolen by Enmore Estate. Stop carrying out Bookers policy of racial division. Hands off Buxton Lands!
17. New marketing conditions for pig and paddy farmers. Realistic grading systems and a share for the farmers in the final product.
18. NIS old age benefit must become payable at the time of the worker's retirement and not at age 65 as at present.
19. Perform at once the various district drainage schemes to save crops and secure farmers' crops from destruction. Compensation for damage by flooding and damage by sugar estate aeroplane spraying.



## ACQUIT DESMOND TROTTER

The case of Desmond Trotter, the 21 year old member of the Movement for a New Dominica comes before the Privy Council on appeal soon. He has been sentenced to hang for a criminal offence, the alleged murder of a white tourist.

This can be seen as the culmination of the Dominican state's continual harassment of Trotter. He began as a Civil Servant, and was suspended for his trade union activities. Together with other radical youths, he was consistently threatened by the police and arrested 'on suspicion'. June 1972 saw a strike which resulted in a state of emergency lasting two months. Movement for a New Dominica was seen as spearheading popular opposition to the government. Trotter's enforced unemployment meant that he was active in organising the urban unemployed, many of whom were returning to the countryside to live off the land. Over the

next two years up to 1974, the social organisation of the youth on the streets and in the countryside and further strikes meant that police repression intensified. Desmond Trotter was framed at this time. (See *Race Today* September 1974, January, February and October 1975)

Dominica is a British associated-state. It is therefore the British Labour government which will take the final decision as to whether the Dominican political activist hangs or not.

The British government is implicated in the Desmond Trotter case as it materially assists the Dominican state's expansion of its police force. This arm of the state has been instrumental in the events leading up to Desmond Trotter's arrest and sentence.

Pressure is being brought on both the British Government and the Government of Dominica.

Letters and messages of protest should be sent to Minister of Home Affairs, Government Headquarters, Kennedy Avenue, Roseau, Dominica, West Indies and James Callaghan, Foreign Secretary, House of Commons, London W.1.



## VICTORY FOR AUSTRALIAN MILITANTS

On November 27th a Brisbane District Court Judge dismissed the case against black militants Denis Walker, and Lionel Lacey and white supporter John Garcia, before any evidence could be presented before the already chosen all white jury. The case was dismissed on the grounds that — “the indictment did not disclose an offence known to law” — a clear confirmation of the slimness of the evidence on which the police had hoped to put away the three militants for a maximum of 14 years.

The three were arrested 16 months ago at a time when the struggle against racism was making significant progress in getting Trade Union support around the campaign to have the blatant racist Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' Acts smashed (*Race Today* August 1975).

The arrests were engineered by the Special Branch, the Queensland Political Police. Their purpose was clear — to demobilise the movement and by example to threaten any militancy in the working class. The charges arose out of a confrontation that took place in August 1974, between representatives of the black community and the President of the Queensland University Students' Union, to discuss ways and means of getting student support for the setting up of a community school on the Aboriginal Reserve of Palm Island.

Prior to the visit the head of Special Branch telephoned the University to warn that a kidnap attempt would be made on the President of the Union. No evidence has ever been brought forward to validate the authenticity of the alleged kidnap attempt, but it served to convince the Union President to have a secret tape recording made of the conversation that took place with the delegation of blacks. The police used some verbal threats made during this conversation to mount a case against the three militants.

During the 16 months of legal proceedings the charges were changed four times; one of the defendants, Lionel Lacey, who was 16 at the time, was acquitted in a Children's court yet *recharged on the same offence* as soon as he turned 17; Denis

Walker, who was arrested in a different state (New South Wales) fought a 6 month battle against extradition, lost it, and then had the charge on which he was extradited changed once he was in Queensland.

Following the arrests, police moved swiftly into the black community to make it clear that all who had been even remotely associated with the University incident or the Palm Island campaign were liable to be charged with conspiracy. The immediate consequence was a demobilisation of the Act. Confrontation campaign and a set-back for the anti-racist struggle in Queensland. But the set-back was only temporary. The campaign mounted around the defence of the Brisbane Three soon gathered momentum and became one of the most significant anti-repression and victimisation campaigns ever waged in Australia. It provided the Australian left and the Trade Unions with a clear issue around which to unite and it re-established and extended the support for black rights that the Act Confrontation campaign had begun prior to the arrests.

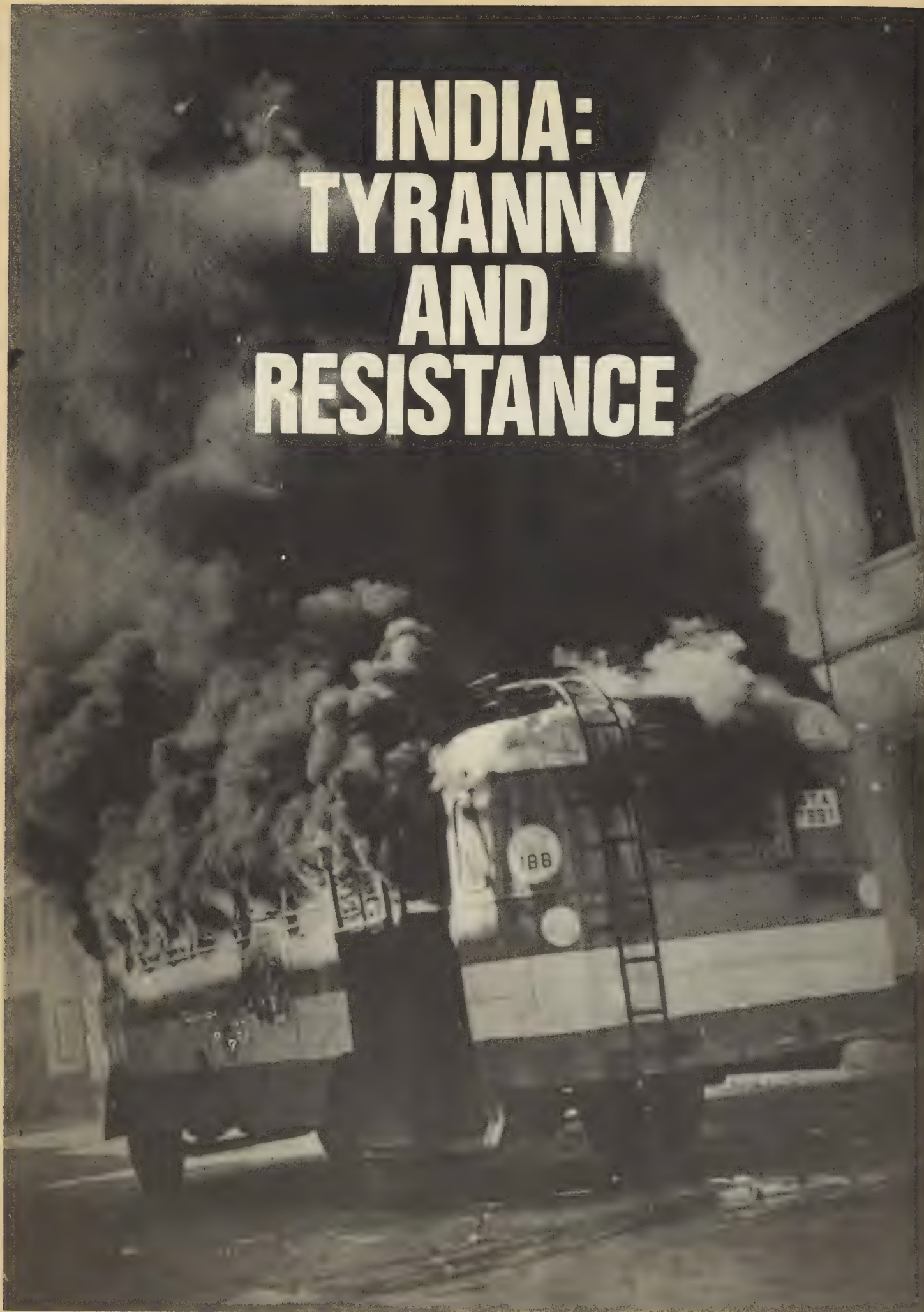
The case had to be dismissed on a legal technicality but the police still have the option of appealing on the dismissal or issuing a revised charge. That they have not done so yet is partly due to the delicate political climate in Australia in recent weeks. Now, with the change of national government to an openly reactionary Liberal-Country Party Coalition with a determined policy to suppress any militancy in the Australian working class, it is probable that the ultra-reactionary Queensland government will try to pursue the matter further as a means of isolating the black movement.

The campaign around the Brisbane three has already been broadened to include the victimisation of other black militants. International support is essential to ensure that the isolation of the struggle of Australian blacks is lessened. John Garcia, one of the Brisbane three, is in London and is anxious to consolidate and extend the links which have already been formed through this campaign. He can be contacted through the offices of *Race Today*.





# INDIA: TYRANNY AND RESISTANCE





Since the State of Emergency in India, June 1975, the Indira Gandhi regime has exercised complete control of any news coming out of India. *Race Today*, however, has consistently received news reports and documents from the active underground press.

In this article we oppose the view presented in the British newspaper that the Indian Emergency is a drama of personal power, and that the present phase in India represents a trial by ordeal of the parliamentary system and democracy'.

Our information shows instead a direct link between the Emergency as a weapon of repression against an emergent revolutionary urban and agrarian movement in India, a repression to preserve the class dominance of landlords and capitalists, and to attract more international investments

Even before the Declaration of the Emergency in India in June last year, the sickness of India's economy showed itself, not only in the statistics of unemployment, under-production and starvation of resources, but in the suffering and reaction of the people. Since the Declaration of the Emergency, Indira Gandhi's government and the State bureaucracy through which her intentions filter to the nation, have made several moves and promises. Six months after these declarations of intent, these excuses for the open repression practised by the regime, we have the information to chart the course of Indira's revival programme. The measures taken by the government in these months give us an adequate basis for examining the crisis of parliamentary government in India, the economic realities behind it, the attempt once again, this time in desperation, to solve the problems of Indian and foreign capital and Indian landlordism at the expense of the people of the country.

Over the last few years, India's economy has been more stagnant and more prone to the effects of inflation than any other capitalist economy in the world. With regard to India one cannot say that a crisis hit it at a particular time. For hundreds of years exploitation has been the crisis of India. Over the last few years there has been a steady decline in per-capita income for all but the big capitalists and the landlords. The unemployment in India is estimated, for both rural and urban areas as between 50 million and 70 million. The rural population of landless agricultural labour and small farmers has been pauperised. The industrial working class finds it impossible to make ends meet and research has revealed that over 90% of the workers in Ahmedabad, a fairly old capitalist centre, are in debt. More than two thirds of India's population lives below the starvation line. The Fourth Five year plan has been virtually abandoned and the Fifth Five year plan, a title which pretends that some vestige of control is left to the government in directing the economy, has failed to materialise.

In 1974, in a desperate attempt to get production to full capacity again and stop the rise in prices, the government imposed a wage freeze and a credit squeeze. Money was taken from the workers and the small investors and small producers were denied essential credit. Far from solving the

problems of stagnation and inflation the crisis deepened. Quite simply, what happened was that the government took purchasing power away from all sections of the population except the black marketeers, the big capitalists and the large landlords. By reducing the buying capacity of the population as a whole, even to buy the essentials of life such as food and clothes, it threw industry into a condition of 'over-production'. It is not that we mean that there were too many goods produced, but that there was no money in the hands of workers and peasants with which to buy them. As a consequence the factory owners cut production in their plants, and the capitalists refused to invest in the production of goods that wouldn't be bought. In every industry this led to mass lay-offs and lockouts of workers, to a halt in production, to the under-use of the capacity of plants such as cloth mills, jute mills, fertiliser factories, sugar factories, steel mills, and mills for goods made from steel and other metals such as aluminium. Far from reducing prices to clear the shelves, the 'solution' has led to the ruination of small industry, hoarding, the rising of prices of all essential commodities and the further impoverishment of the workers and complete beggary of the rural proletariat and peasantry.

On October the 3rd the *Economic Times* in India reported:

"Industrial units in almost all sectors, despite rigours of the emergency, have been laying off or retrenching workers on a large scale. Even the recent announcement of the government that the centre would bring in legislation to prevent unjustified lay-offs and retrenchment of employees has in no way acted as a deterrent on the industrial employers. The main reason for lay-offs or retrenchment as preferred by the employers despite the emergency is the accumulation of stocks and no sales. According to figures available with the trade unions, more than a lakh (100,000) workers have so far been affected by lockouts, lay-offs, closures and retrenchment."

It was in this economic climate that the emergency was declared.





# STATE OF EMERGENCY

The Declaration of Emergency can now be seen as a direct result of the threatened overthrow of the Congress regime by a concerted people's movement.

It really started with the 1967 General Elections in which the defeat of Indira's Congress in several states paved the way for extra parliamentary action on the part of industrial workers and rural population alike. The Gujarat student action of 1974 and the Indian Railway strike ( see *Race Today* April 1975) were the early high points of the people's demands and in a sense indicators of the gathering strength of a total revolutionary trend.

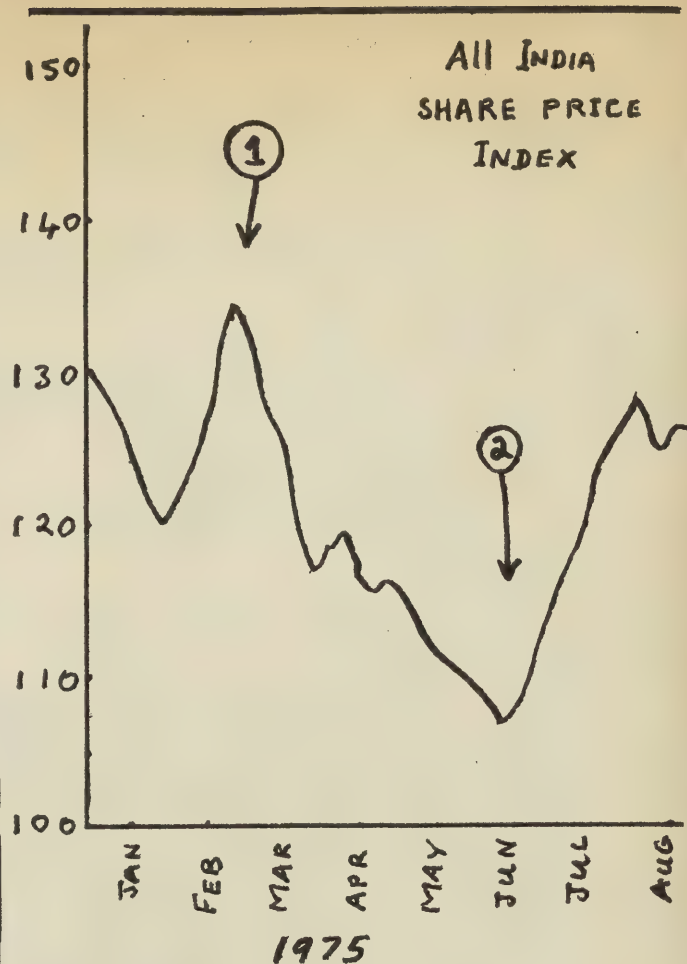
The emergency resulted in the mass arrests of the leaders of parties such as the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which is a major agitational force in the country. The Jayaprakash Narayan Movement in Bihar, which followed the student agitation victory in Gujarat against rising prices and corruption, was a coalition of the dissatisfactions of most sections of the population and the opportunism of the organised opposition parties. The emergency certainly dealt a blow to these leaders but failed to attack the root cause which gave momentum to such a movement for total revolution, for a new economic and political design for India.

In the first two months of this year, prior to the Declaration of Emergency, 53 new foreign collaborations were licensed and registered with the government of India, and the World Bank Study team, critical of the talk of self reliance which has filled New Delhi for years, has this to say about India's 'independence':

"India should reshape its industrial development programmes, lean away from heavy and capital goods industry, and go for massive export production during the coming decade."

In the World Bank Study is the scarcely veiled recommendation that India should abandon all attempts to build its own self-reliance and heavy industrial infra-structure and should concentrate instead on tailoring its economy to becoming a production and cheap labour haven for the Western capitalist countries who would sell the produce of India competitively abroad. It remains to be seen how much of this recommendation Indira Gandhi will take up and implement, but the recent relaxation of import of capital as well as of capital goods, indicates that she has already chosen to fit the requirements of the international division of labour and turn India into a flag-flying ghetto of the international monopolies.

As the accompanying graph shows, the economic community welcomed the emergency as a move to shift the burden of the crisis off their shoulders and onto the unbroken back of the working masses.



## "The Pulse of Capital:

The above graph shows the Economic Times Index of share prices in response to the political and economic situation in 1975. Note points (1) where the graph, following the Allahabad High Court decision finding Indira Gandhi guilty of corrupt electoral practices and the Gujarat elections which came at the same time and overthrew the Congress government in the state, plunges downwards, and (2) when the declaration of the emergency is reflected in increased share market confidence."

## THE NEW DEAL

On July 3rd, a few weeks after the official declaration of emergency, and in the period when newspapers were being subjected to the strictest censorship, the Ministers of the Congress called for a 'get tough' policy and presented in their propaganda a bouquet of promises:

- A tremendous leap forward in agricultural production.
- A promise to implement the land reform that the Congress Party itself has legislated and done nothing about for the last twenty years.
- Curbs on petrol and power consumption.
- The formation of income tax flying squads to descend on the luxury belt of the cities.
- A 'tea rejuvenation scheme' for the ailing gardens of Darjeeling.
- A national tripartite insurance scheme against lay-offs, with equal contributions from workers, employers and government.
- The provision of 50 mini supermarkets in Delhi as an example to other cities.





h) 'Workers participation' in industry.

i) An attack on 'rumour mongering'.

In reality the New Deal has put a ban on workers assemblies, on strikes, on go-slows or any other action which people might take to hit production in a fight for better wages and conditions.

The resolution to introduce 'workers participa-

tion' was immediately translated into a predictable practice. The government called on its own party controlled unions and those of the Communist Party of India, (Moscow) who support the Gandhi government, to send representatives to boards of industries. The result was that the basic minimum wage was raised to Rs 300 a month (£16) on condition that the unions would exercise a wage freeze for the next four years.

In some states such as Karnataka, workers participation and cooperation schemes have meant a seven day week for public sector employees. In Maharashtra the government has expressed a desire to cut all public holidays to three a year.

The three trade union groups, Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and Hindustan Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) supported the Emergency, under which the government introduced a Bonus Regulation Scheme as part of a new deal for the poor. The bonus system, won after years of struggle from employers, is a system by which workers get a month's wages as a deferred part of their earnings each year. This bonus payment allowed them to pay debts and buy proper food and clothes for their families. Under the so-called New Deal, it was not only reduced but was tied to productivity. Factories in which no productivity boost took place now gave no bonus to their workers. This scheme sparked off retaliatory strike actions.

On the fourth and fifth of October the workers at Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals in Hyderabad went on strike, and were fired on by the police. In Tamil Nadu, the non-congress southern state, which has defied to an extent the censorship laws of the government, more concerted action was possible. Nine trade union organisations staged





a token strike on the 24th of October to have the regulation revoked. Hundreds of thousands of workers in textiles, engineering, sugar, cement, plantations, leather processing, bidi (rolled tobacco cigarettes) works, rubber factories, foundries, fertiliser factories and a hundred other enterprises observed the strike and closed the state down for a day. On the following days the workers were called on by the leaders to wear badges signifying their resistance to the regulation. Against their national policy the leadership of INTUC and the AITUC were forced to join the strike through pressure from their membership.

The strike revealed that the working class of India do not support the emergency and have seen

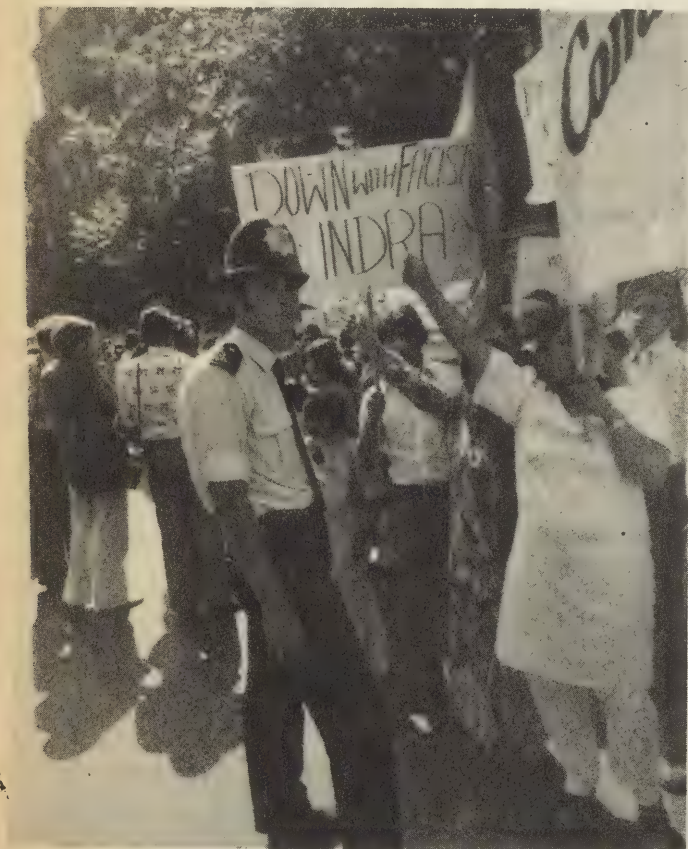
## ...CENSORED NEWS FROM INDIA...

Since the emergency, Indira Ghandi's regime has escalated the scale of attack on the student communities of India. In most universities the emergency has come as the signal for the dissolution of students councils, the denial of admission to militant students on a black list circulated by the state, the harassment and expulsion of known left-wing leaders and attempted silencing of the published voice of critical and informed student opinion.

In Punjab, the principal of Rada College in Ludhiana and the police went further. On September 2nd, 1975, the police, following mass agitation at the college, shot dead Charanjeet, a woman leader of the Student Federation of India (SFI) and cremated the body to avoid a post-mortem.

In the previous month the Principal of the college, Mr. O.P. Pandey had summoned the police with allegations that the SFI was holding secret meetings and distributing anti-government literature. The police attempted to arrest five SFI members, but found that they had gone underground. The police then went to the villages of the activists and arrested their parents and took away their cattle as ransom for the wanted students. When the police found Charanjeet, they shot her.

Hundreds of students from her college and from neighbouring colleges went to her village in a demonstration of fearlessness. The stage was set for a total student strike and disruptive action in Ludhiana and the police were forced to withdraw their campaign. The Principal promised the students that no more victimisations would take place, and the case against the other activists was withdrawn. A mass campaign has now been launched in Punjab for the investigation of the murder of Charanjeet, and with the support of the village panchayats (councils) it has become the focus for joint university-village action.





## ...CENSORED NEWS FROM INDIA...

On 1st December 1975, the Indian State put to death by hanging the revolutionaries Gunal Kishta Gowd (45) and Jangam Bhoomaiah (48), having kept them through appeals and trials in imprisonment for the last four years.

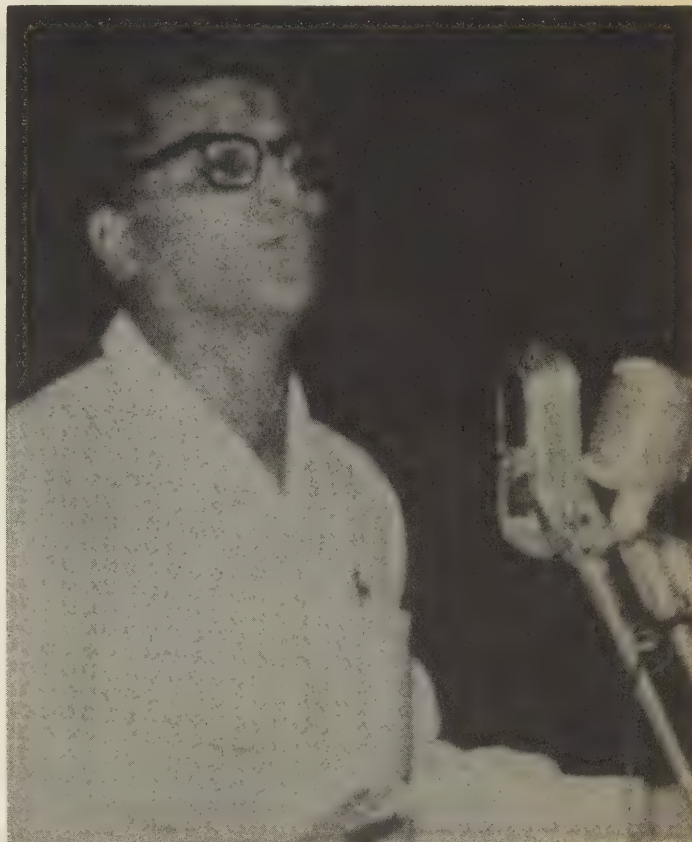
Gowd and Bhoomaiah were found guilty in 1971 of the murder of a tyrant landlord in Andhra Pradesh. Their trial, known as the Parvatipuram trial, resulted in guilty verdicts and became the focus for the attentions of the temporarily defeated Marxist-Leninist movement of militant revolutionary action. Both freedom fighters belonged to the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), now banned and hunted under emergency regulations. What distinguished Gowd and Bhoomaiah from the other prisoners held in insurrectionary incidents for acts of 'landlord liquidation' (the Naxalite's term for killing of rural overlords) was that they were from peasant backgrounds and had a direct material stake in their actions, unlike the city revolutionaries and intelligentsia who joined the Naxal movement.

The act of execution is undoubtedly intended as a demonstration of the state's power over the dissenting and as a deterrent to the peasantry whose potential for violent uprising against the blatant lawlessness of the landlords has been demonstrated time and again in the Indian countryside.

In October 1975, their final appeal to the Supreme Court failed. Their first appeal before the Supreme Court judgement, was brushed aside in spite of the fact that members of the intelligentsia and the middle class have been afforded clemency in similar circumstances.

The killing of Gowd and Bhoomaiah will undoubtedly result in retaliations on the State. Censorship and the imprisonment of those who would send us news from India makes it impossible to report at this stage the acts of subversion and resistance that the underground claim.

the New Deal for what it is. The strike took place in the state of Tamil Nadu, because the workers there are partially insulated by the Dravida Munetra Kazhagam (DMK) state government from the full force of the emergency regulations — the embargo on news and the prohibition of the right to assemble. The strike in Tamil Nadu will undoubtedly be an inspiration to the general working class struggle as it demonstrated that the emergency is itself a basis of unity for all sections against it. It also showed that the unions, even the INTUC and the AITUC, get their power not from the protection of the Indira government, but from the determination of the workers acting to safeguard their material interests.





# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

## WHITES AND BONFIRE NIGHT

EVENING POST

### Plot night incident — 12 remanded

Twelve people, including five schoolboys, from the Chapeltown area of Leeds were remanded by Leeds magistrates on charges arising out of an incident on Bonfire Night in the district.

A condition of bail for each of the accused was that they should not interfere with witnesses.

Mr. Raymond Plunkett, prosecuting, asked for a remand to February 12 for committal proceedings.

The accused are: Maxim Paul Beresford Farrar (26), lecturer, Harehills Avenue; Henry Ronald Grey (17), welder, Harehills Avenue; Glenville Ashley Sheriffe (18), apprentice engineer, Francis Street, and his brother Clyde Sheriffe (16), Francis Street; Anthony Clancy Pyke (18), unemployed, Sholebroke Mount; Derek Melrose Crossley (17), welder, Grange View; Claude Henrickson (15), Sholebroke View; Ernest Vernon Fleming (16), Leopold Street; David O'Henry Cohen (21), unemployed, St. Martin's Terrace; Michael Walters (14), Francis Street; Eunie Stephenson Maurice (17), tailor, Sholebroke Avenue; and Keith Ian Gumbs (16), Hamilton Avenue.

Reporting restrictions were lifted at an earlier hearing.

#### RESERVATION

Mr. Barrington Black, for the Sheriffe brothers and Fleming, accepted the date but said he would reserve the right to ask for another remand if the papers in the case had not been served in sufficient time to consult his clients about them.

Mr. B. Hill, for Pyke; Mr. G. Platt, for Gumbs; Mr. Howard Cohen, for Grey and Farrar; Mrs. Mavis Gibson, for Walters, Maurice and Cohen, and Mr. J. Kozonguizi, all accepted the remand date.

Fleming faces two charges of using threatening words or behaviour whereby a breach of the peace might be caused and Farrar, Pyke, Henrickson, Crossley, Gumbs, Cohen, Walters and Maurice, each face one charge of threatening behaviour.

Grey faces three charges of criminal damage; Clyde Sheriffe, Fleming and Gumbs two charges of criminal damage, and Glenville Sheriffe, Crossley, Cohen, Walters and Maurice, one charge of criminal damage each.

#### OTHER CONDITIONS

Grey is also charged with assault occasioning actual bodily harm and Henrickson with malicious wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

Other conditions of bail were applied to the accused.

Farrar was allowed bail in his own surety of £25, Grey and Glenville Sheriffe each

in his own surety of £100, with one other surety each of £100 and conditions of residence and reporting twice a week to the police.

Pyke was granted bail, in his own surety of £50, with a condition of residence and reporting twice weekly to the police.

The remaining accused, Fleming, Clyde Sheriffe, Walters, Maurice, Cohen, Crossley, Henrickson and Gumbs, were each granted bail in his own surety of £50, with one other surety of £50 each.

Dear Race Today,

We enjoyed your article on the action by Chapeltown youth against the police on Bonfire Night, and we have reprinted it in the December issue of our paper. I'd like to take up some of the points you raised.

Your article made a good job of the establishment's reaction to the youth. One or two points that you might have added, if you'd had more space, are: the attempt by the Chapeltown Community Association to join the establishment by deploring the youth and calling for more talks with the police; the offer by Errol James, CRC chairman, to do the police's job for them by providing "heavy" supervision for next year's bonfire; and a jab at Maureen Baker's call for a public enquiry — a pitiful attempt to restore her own dashed hopes — would not have been out of place.

The only thing some of us disagree with was the last part of the sentence "Hooligans, frustrated youth, hope and prayer," summed up the range of reaction to the intervention of young blacks, and of course, the traditional racist response of working class whites.

Not for a minute do we deny that many white working class people are racist, but the interesting thing about Bonfire Night is that there has been no overt sign of such a reaction from the working class. One letter printed by the *Evening Post* did condemn the police for their (claimed) low key approach, and called for increased police activity to stop Chapeltown from becoming a no-go area — but this came from a comfortable middle class address. I

know, in fact, that many white working class youth were highly enthusiastic about the Chapeltown action, and some had been involved in similar activities in their own areas.

Nonetheless, many white working class adults were frightened by the action, and it is this fear that the National Front will play upon. But then many adult blacks were frightened too. In the editorial we printed about Bonfire Night we tried to put these fears in perspective. We tried to show that worse forms of violence occur to working class people every moment of their lives (accidents and deaths at work, battered wives, police brutality etc). We also applied the point made in the Detroit article in November's *Race Today*. We argued that all of Chapeltown — blacks and whites — would benefit from the youth's action. Firstly, because the youth have not repeated the mistakes of previous militant actions in Chapeltown, — which have concentrated on a single reformist demand and dispersed as soon as that demand was met. And secondly because the establishment can only react to the youth by spending more money on housing and community facilities in the area — to



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

the immediate benefit of us all.

The most difficult issue raised by the youth's action is the response of militants in Chapeltown. We touch on this in our editorial when we write:

"New forms of organisation are needed. . . which will take up the struggle initiated by the youth, organisation which will learn from the youth and which will not be satisfied with the partial victories of past groups. . . We believe that the youth must be central to the new organisation that is able to generalise the (youth's) struggle."

The Chapeltown News Collective is well rooted in the area, but its activists are white, and reject opportunistic interventions. We start from the principle that black people must organise autonomously and co-operate with white groups on their own terms. But this is easier said than done. Chapeltown's major black organisation is in a state of flux, and it is not clear that the new kind of organisation will emerge.

The question that arises, therefore, is what legitimate role can the Chapeltown News Collective play under these circumstances? Do we restrict ourselves to propaganda, or do we attempt the pressing task of organising a defence group for which, as you say, "combat has got to be the theme"?

These are far more complex questions than those raised by Terry Fitzpatrick and Duncan Brown in their reply to I.S. in last month's *Race Today*. Only through thoughtful struggle will we find answers to these questions, and argument in the pages of *Race Today* will guide our thought.

Solidarity with the Bonfire Night youth!

A member of the Chapeltown News Collective.

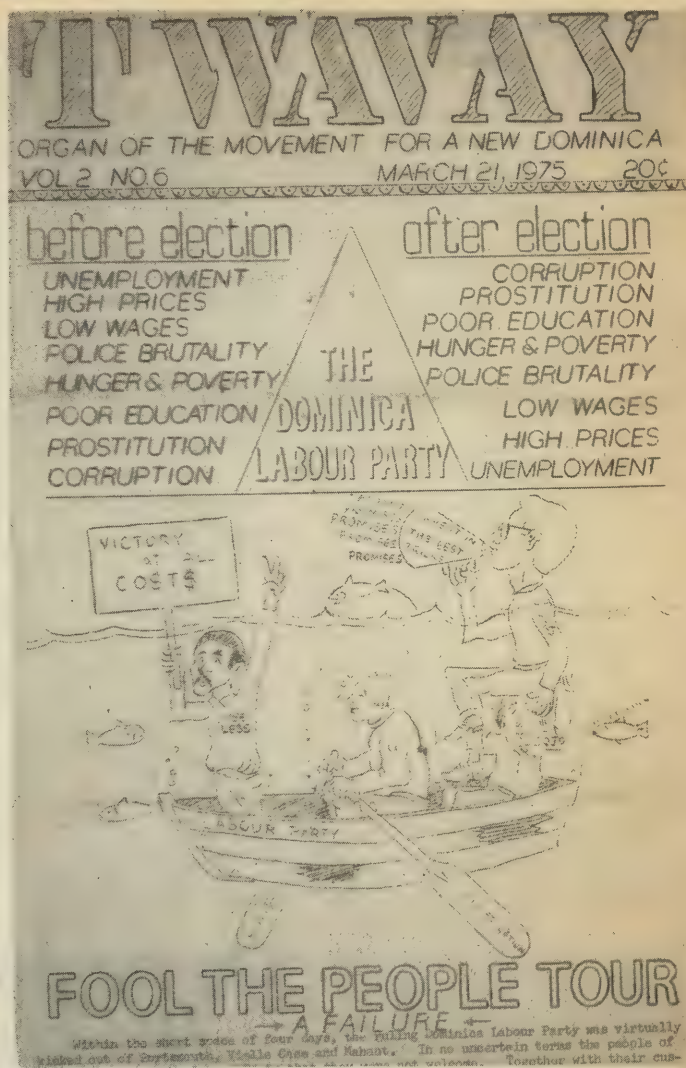
## DREAD DOMINICA

Dear *Race Today*,

I write to applaud your efforts in producing a very articulate article on Dominica in the October 1975 issue of *Race Today*. It is very comforting to know that there are still a few journalists of your calibre who refuse to obscure the present political climate in the Caribbean.

Dominica has become a country where police vengeance is present and legal safeguards absent. It is well known that the Dominican Government passed a law in 1974 making it legal for any citizen to shoot or kill anyone who is suspected of being a radical. Furthermore, under the Unlawful Association Act, the Government can label any group or organization 'radical' which is critical of government policies.

I am greatly enraged by the British Government's reluctance to intervene in the Desmond Trotter



case or even to consider the inhumanity of these laws, in Dominica, which is still a British colony. However, the British Government wasted no time in expressing its outrage at the recent death sentences and executions in Spain.

Equality in Dominica and the other Caribbean islands is non-existent; civil rights are being slowly eroded. I shall outline some of the social and economic problems which confront Dominica today. You will then realize why the Dominican Government has arrogated to itself the right to pass inhumane laws to protect political vandalism.

1. Corruption and gross immorality in public affairs. For example when Ministers use their offices to procure land etc. for themselves and for their friends.
2. Exploitation of young unemployed females by leading ministers.
3. Misappropriation and waste of public funds which are frittered away through trips abroad; trips that usually solve no problems and gain nothing in the public interest.
4. The illegal use of public assets and public facilities by ministers in their own private interests.
5. The violation of laws and regulations by ministers and leaders. Laws and regulations



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

that they themselves have set up and which they should help to enforce in the interest of the public.

6. The use of the State-owned and State controlled Press by ministers to publicize themselves and to justify their illegal actions; their use of such media to help bring their selfish ambitions to fruition; and their use of such media to work out their machiavellian strategies for perpetuating themselves in office.
7. The fact that persons who hold top positions in the Public (Civil) Service may become ardent election campaigners in order to remain 'in the good books' of the ministers.
8. Although Dominica depends mainly on agriculture for economic survival, the Government spent in 1973 a meagre E.C \$972,000 (£194,000) on agriculture as opposed to E.C. \$1,920,000.— (£384,000) on Law and Order.
9. 85% of the best lands are in the hands of a few families and foreign companies.
10. The National Youth Council estimated that the unemployment percentage in 1974 was at least 30%.

The situation has become quite intolerable. It is those factors among others which help impede the social and economic development of Dominica.

Therefore, individuals and organizations such as Movement for a New Dominica (MND) and New Jewel Movement, among others, are labelled radicals or 'communists' whenever they become openly critical of mismanagement and corruption in high places.

The realistic hope for creating an atmosphere of change in Dominica or the Caribbean on the whole will be fortunate enough to get men who are willing to take the risk and assume the responsibility to perform the necessary surgery without regard for their popularity among politicians.

Ernest Merrill.

## ALEX LYING?

Dear Race Today,

On the 1st December, 1975, an article in the 'Guardian', written by Amrit Wilson, quoted Alex Lyon as saying that the Home Office never instructed police to harass immigrants, and that the police acted on their own initiative.

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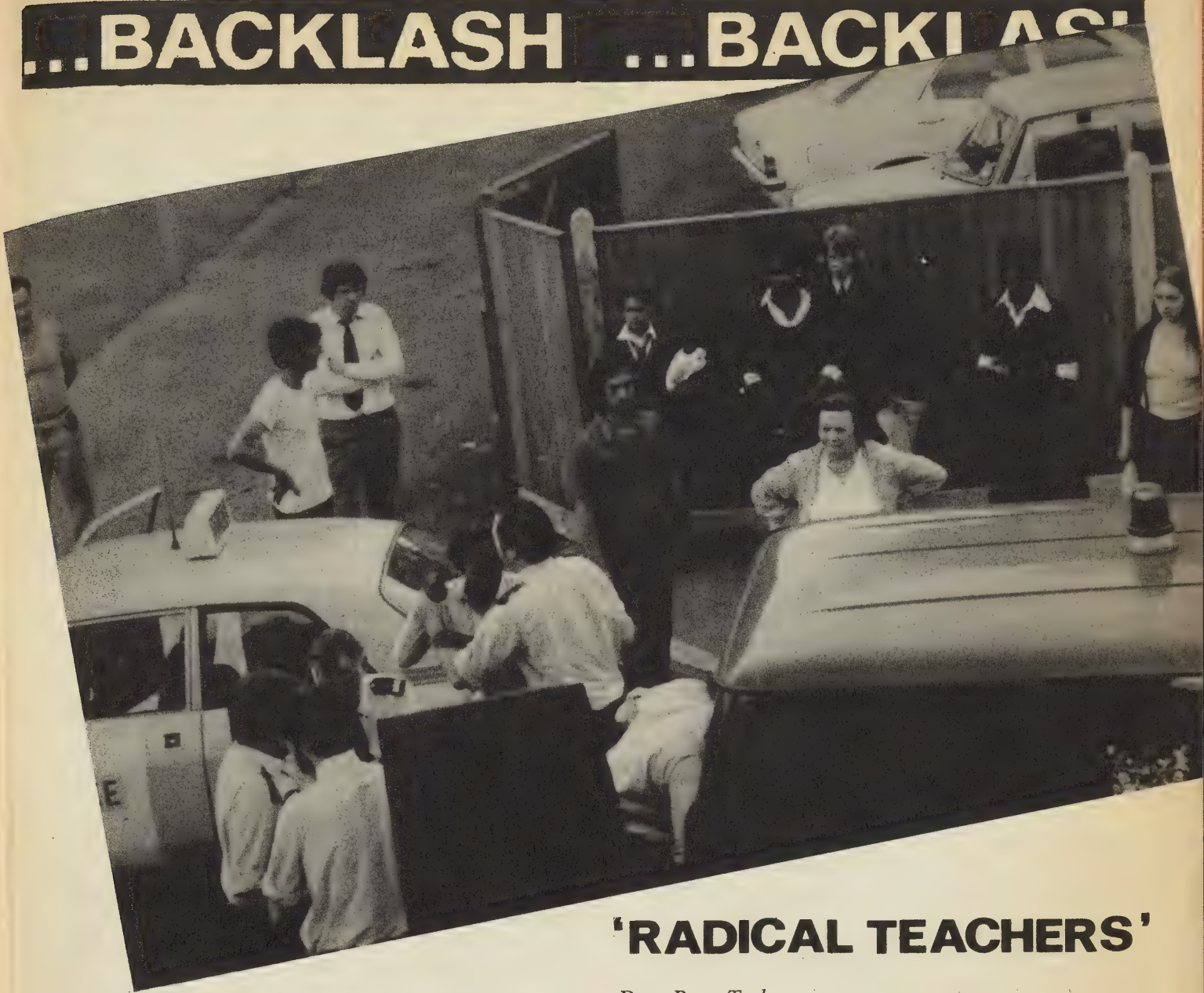
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# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH



## 'RADICAL TEACHERS'

*Dear Race Today,*

In response to the backlash, 'School as a Weapon' in December *Race Today*, I really feel like saying "come off it, Chris Searle."

If I said the factory was an important arena of political and social struggle, not many would disagree. But if I went on and said that foremen and managers were important agents of that struggle, then people would think I was daft, and rightly so!

But when it comes to school there's always a mental block on the left. Many people seem to ignore the fact that teachers are in schools what foremen and managers are in factories — mediators who by *their daily activity* enforce the system.

By all means let's welcome struggle in all areas— wherever there's authority, there's always resistance. But let's have struggle from below, not from middlemen in the power hierarchy. If you are a teacher because it's a job that can be interesting, O.K. But let's not pretend there can be anything revolutionary about the role of the teacher in the classroom. Radical teacher? To my mind that's a contradiction in terms. What next? Radical policemen?

Bob Dent.

On Thursday 4th December, 1975, at approximately 4 p.m., I had a meeting at my office with three staff members of the N.C.C.L. During the meeting two police officers, from Hornsey Police Station, came to my office and told me that they wanted one of my clients, a Miss Ayshe Yusuf, to come to the police station for questioning on an immigration matter. I told them that if they wanted to question Miss Yusuf, an appointment could be made for her to be interrogated by the police in my office.

I asked the police officers, in front of my three witnesses, if they had instructions from the Home Office to take Miss Yusuf to the police station for questioning, and they said, yes. I repeated my question to them, and asked them, whether it is on police initiative that they wanted to question Miss Yusuf, and they categorically stated that they were only doing so on Home Office instructions.

R. Davis,  
Greek & Turkish Cypriot Advice Centre.



# REVIEWS

## THE MARLEY DEBATE: OFF THE TRACK

Dread Fred's reply to 'Roots and Rock', *The Marley Enigma* (November *Race Today*) is in need of rebuttal by way of elucidation and clarification, for, although he makes his points with wit and irony, Dread Fred's 'Needle In Groove' is way off the track. Moreover, though Dread Fred is undoubtedly well-read he is not so well-listened! No doubt he too has been overcome by the force of the Marley fad, or else he must be surely mad and that would be, O too sad. He's not. And I am glad for clarity's sake.

Dread Fred says 'Roots and Rock. . .' reads more like a complaint than appreciation. He adds that it were as though capital has once more defeated a cultural monopoly; once more been able to buy what it cannot conceive; once more turned idolatry into hard cash; and that "the restricted club of empathy with the sounds and sentiments of Rasta rebellion has thrown open its doors, and all sorts — whites, half-castes, even Indians, have flooded in with appreciation." Well now, let us not deny the truth: 'Roots and Rock' was indeed a complaint — it was not meant to be appreciation — but it was more than that too. It was critical commentary coming from a man who has listened keenly to the Wailers but has never been a 'Marley fan'. Secondly, what cultural monopoly? If a people, because of the particularity of their historical experience, create an art whose character is particular to that experience, should we say that this is 'cultural monopoly'? With Marley, capital did not exploit idolatry by turning it into 'hard cash'. Rather, capital created idolatry in order to make big money. And the 'empathy — (though not 'restricted club of') — with the sounds and sentiments of Rasta rebellion' has indeed 'opened up its doors'; in fact, the doors were never barred. And so capital enters and upon entering it takes the house over and immediately begins to rearrange and change things around: a little bit of wahwah here, some howling guitar there, a little wailing harmonica here and so on.

Dread Fred goes on to say that I 'somehow' imply that you can't universalise the appreciation of an art form without diluting it. Is it not music with which we are dealing? And is not music a universal art form? The appreciation of an art form is universal because of the universality of that art form. And the art itself also enjoys universal appreciation by virtue of the universality of the sentiments, emotions, hopes, fears, and passions that it expresses. Furthermore, melting pot music is not the same thing as universal music.

In 'Roots and Rock. . .' I said that the dread in Marley's music had been largely replaced by 'the howling rock guitar and the funky rhythm'. What I should have said was 'blues guitar' instead of 'funky rhythm.' But Dread Fred persists with his folly by attributing to I the misdeed of "arguing

whose ghetto is 'funkier' ". There is of course a meeting point between black American music and Jamaican music. This is so because the historical experience of the black American and the Afro-Jamaican is the common experience of the black man in the 'new world.' Jamaica has in fact a long established blues and jazz tradition, but it is Jamaican Jazz and Jamaican Blues. And there are a number of instances where black American music has enriched Jamaican music — the music of Don Drummond and the Skatalites and the Upsetters on the dub LP of the same title. Likewise, Jamaican music has in some cases enriched black American music. In both cases the music remains true to the particularity of the historical experience which has given its special character.

Again Dread Fred implores me to listen to the LP *Natty Dread* and I will hear a positive development in Marley's art and that I should "compare" the "easy American love ballad style" of *Baby We've Got a Date from Catch a Fire* to the "hard and beautiful realisation of *No Woman No Cry*", from *Natty Dread* and I will see how Marley has progressed. He then expresses a kind of resigned irony when he says: "Capital sells, people buy. Sad. It sells George Jackson's prison letters and it sells Malcolm's Autobiography; it sells films, records, anything it can lay its tentacles on. . .". But what Dread Fred fails to "overstan" is that capital does not transform or adulterate the essence of Malcolm's Autobiography or George Jackson's Prison Letters. Neither does it render inert what is positive in them. With Marley, the essential character of the music is transformed by capital in seeking to popularise it. It is Dread Fred who would 'listen' and 'compare'. Let him listen to the music of the Wailers before Island Records took them over and note the difference in the character of music as well as Marley's lyricism. Let him compare Herbsman to *Catch A Fire*. Let him compare the lyrical contrivance of *No Woman No Cry* with the *artikal* rendering of *Down By The River Side* by the Burning Spear. Compare the almost lyrical flippancy of Marley's *Natty Dread* (single) with the harsh concretization of Big Youth's chant in *Dread Inna Babylon* or to *House of Dreadlocks*. Compare Marley's *Soh Jah Seh* to *None a Jah Jah Children No Cry*, a Marley inspired song, by Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus.

Dread Fred says that "the lyrical and ironic anger of Jamaica has found an international stage." Truly so. And this, largely due to the Jamaican diaspora — a part of a wider Caribbean diaspora in Europe and North America. Fred goes on to say that "Marley's success has paved the way to acclaim for Big Youth and Burning Spear." Burning Spear has been signed up by Island Records and for those who really care about what is happening to Jamaican music, we only hope that the negation does not follow. Big Youth and Burning Spear





Dave Clark

have already achieved universality in and with their art in their ability to express and communicate both the individual and the collective experience; the private as well as the public sentiment; the individual vision as well as the collective conception. And Marley too had achieved this universality before capital took over. What Marley and the new Wailers now play is "Kinky Reggae", and his success will undoubtedly make it "easier" for other Jamaican artists. But Marley has set an unfortunate musical precedent. Keith Hudson's *Torch of Freedom* is an example of the trend in music which the Wailers under Island has set. *Torch of Freedom* is *Vulgar Reggae*.

Marley's latest single, *Jah Lives*, does not point to any positive development in his art; in fact the enigma is still there. *Jah Lives* is a response to the death of Haile Selassie wherein Marley expresses his unshakeable faith. But with the almost sluggish bass that bounces low with a whole lotta show with foot-drum catchin ska rhythm as it drop inna chunky time; guitar howlin sorrow sweet like it bitter-sweet; organ chuckin all di way with chorus lamenting; the song has a mood of dronish melancholy. So that whilst Marley proclaims (in a tone that is more boasting than celebratory):

*Selassie I live*  
*Selassie I live*  
*Selassie I live*

the feeling or the emotion that is invoked is one of remorse rather than joy.

Finally, Dread Fred says that capital's transformation of Marley's art should not be compared to the way "Latin-American was picked up, peddled and turned into night club musak"; and that Marley's audiences in the West "are not fantasy tourists. . .". It would seem that in unveiling capital's negation of the power of negation in Marley's art, I have also disturbed the still waters of Dread Fred's musical melting pot ideal. But as Marley himself puts it so succinctly in *Jah Lives* (and it is Marley's art that really has the final say):

*the truth is an offence*

*but not a sin*  
*is he who laugh last. . .*  
*is he who win.*

Linton Kwesi Johnson.

## WHICH WAY BLACK ARTISTS

In his reply to Linton Kwesi Johnson's article 'Roots and Rock: The Marley Enigma', Dread Fred seems to base his criticism on some vague idea of the universality of art and a kind of fatalistic submission to the capitalist manipulation of art.

His argument sounds very much like white integrationist opinion. The independence and self-determination of black expression is denied.

White monopoly has always seen black expression as an intellectual exercise, and exotic novelty, or a commodity. With Afro-American blues it was the over-sexed, gravel voice drunkard; now it's Rasta, Natty Dread and Trench Town. These are the kind of images that the 'white fans' go to freak out on and has nothing to do with resonant anger or solidarity with 'sufferers' for whom Reggae is their way of life. The struggle of the sufferers is recorded and their determination reinforced through the music.

This freak out situation can only lead to a distortion of the peoples' expression and schizophrenia. We all saw what happened to Jimi Hendrix when he tried to reconcile black reality with the purple haze of white culture vulturism.

Universality can only come from the artist through his own evolutionary process, discovering his essential humanity through the perception and reflection of his existence. The black artist must not only record and reflect the existence of his people, he must be seen to be a part of that existence.

The question raised by the Marley enigma is whether or not the black artist will submit to the dictates of capitalism and contradict his cultural reality.

Imruh



# REVIEW NOTES

## Classrooms of Resistance

Compiled by Chris Searle — Writers and Readers  
Publishing Cooperative — Price 85p.

When there's a storm about a book, we are sure that something is in the wind. Various commentators, leafing through *Classrooms of Resistance* (the best way to read it if you're not actually using it as a teacher or pupil), and writing articles in the *Times Educational Supplement* or elsewhere, have slandered the book as left-wing brainwashing in the classroom. Let us disregard their arguments, let us concede that they have grasped the central point, that the book of poems and observations by Chris and his class cannot be separated from the schooling that Chris is giving his class, and go on to congratulate the book and Searle's work on three counts.

*First, congratulations Chris on compiling a book of words from the mouths of babes.*

Not that it hasn't been done before, there are several such books. The writing in Searle's book is not distinguished by its feeling, its economy, its rhythm, scope, power or any of the other clichés that bedevil appreciation. It is distinguished by being the product of a year's activity in three classrooms at the Sir John Cass and Redcoat School in Stepney. It is evidence of what an English programme, with a class bias and political theme, as opposed to the grammar — literature — amateur sociology ones, can produce.

*Second, congratulations on a clear-sighted determination to kill the idea of "freedom of creativity".*

By and large school pupils write what they are expected to write. The choice of subjects — from property speculation in the East End to the terror in Chile — prove themselves just as amenable to versifying as the Loch Ness monster or Lorna

Doone.

*Last, congratulations on building sufficient political clout to be able to be so defiant.*

He has done this by covering his tracks through the national press, by calling into the curriculum the powerful cultural aphorisms and traditions of left-wing trade unionism, and by maintaining a class-analysis based relationship with his pupils. In so doing, Searle has shored strong fragments against the ruin that overtook the teachers of William Tyndale.

Having recorded our approval, we can turn to our quarrels with Searle's curriculum. Searle himself criticises 'liberals' (in the *Times Educational Supplement*) for encouraging children to understand and express the miseries of the individual working class life, and for being loth to entertain *resistive* thought and writing. However, four-fifths of the writing in his book concentrates on what the ruling classes are doing to white workers, to Chileans, to black South Africans and so on. The other fifth bows to trade-unionism as salvation, and transfers the inanities of 'fight', 'smash', 'grab', 'struggle', and 'unite' from the white left press onto ILEA paper. Somewhere the curriculum should have considered the pupils, not as they will be, with union cards and cloth caps, but as they are — a wageless, dependent, underprivileged section of the population, who have nevertheless shown themselves to be the most potent force for revolutionising the institutions that contain them today. We would like to see teachers participating in the movement towards autonomy and financial independence of school pupils rather than creating the freedom within a small part of the school curriculum to write poems about struggle.

Race Today Collective.

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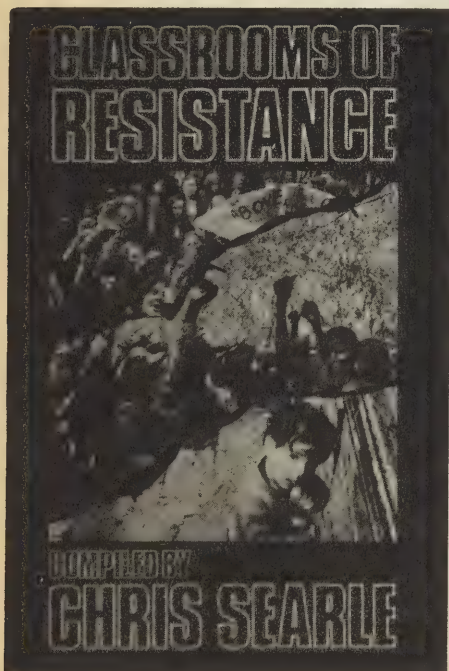
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Edited by Wendy Edmond and Suzie Fleming

This international anthology describes women's lives and struggles through the speeches and writings of many different women. It shows how all women, young or old, single or married, with or without children, 'straight' or lesbian, whatever else they do are housewives. It makes clear how universal is women's need for a wage for housework, and that an international movement of women demanding the 'wages due' is not only possible but already a reality. Of particular interest to *Race Today* readers is 'Wageless of the World' by Selma James, which connects the wageless work of women internationally with the wageless man in the Third World.

128pp. Paperback 70p plus 16p Post and Packing  
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Published by Power of Women Collective and Falling Wall Press 79 Richmond Rd, Montpelier Bristol BS6 5EP

### Ipi-Tombi

Conceived, devised and produced by

Bertha Egnos.

Her Majesty's Theatre.

Ipi-Tombi a black South African musical '... captures the heart beat of the African people.' These are the words which have been used to introduce this musical which is in fact, an orgy of colour, naked black flesh, grass skirts, beads, happy black faces and loud raucous music that is a clash of African and Western styles. A musical made for an audience who find enjoyment in vulgar thrills and the stereotype view of rhythmic happy Africans. At present it is a success, a box office draw.

It is a musical constructed around eight scenes: Village of Tsomo; The Baptism; Nadia: Song of Hope; E'Goli—The City of Gold; Sunday on the Mines; The Township Wedding; Workday on the Mine; The Warriors.

All these scenes are depicted with child-like superficiality. For example, The Baptism, which is supposed to depict the conflict between African tradition and missionary domination is shown as

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follows: the mother Mary is dressed in a flowing white gown — pure and beautiful. The witch doctor is fearsome and evil. The African people sway between the two, confused, not knowing which one to choose. The scene ends.

The scenes, E'Goli—The City of Gold and Sunday on the Mines, glorify the urban existence. Neither the culture of tribal South Africa nor realities of the apartheid system upon which the South African economy is based are portrayed.

The highlight of the musical, The Township Wedding, obviously tries to say something by making the bride wear tribal clothes and the groom wear bow tie and top hat, but the point gets lost on the audience. The wedding song, Baby, Baby sounds like an old Tamla Motown hit.

At the end of the musical one is left with the overriding impression of naked black flesh, male and female. Well almost, the women bow to modesty by covering their bottoms with see-through stockings.

Race Today Collective.



# RACE TODAY BACK ISSUES

Below is a list of back issues available from our office at 40p each including postage.

## 1974

*January:* Race, Sex & Working Class Power, by Selma James

*February:* The Black Explosion in Schools, by Farrukh Dhondy

*March:* Trades Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa, by K. Jordaan

*April:* Asian Workers in Struggle: The Sixth Pan African Congress: Martinique, Anti-Colonial Rebellion: Trinidad, Sugar Workers Intervention

*May:* The Caribbean Revolution Demystified: Black Squatting in Brixton: Asian Women at Heathrow: Ethiopian letter

*June:* Move as a Community.— The Brockwell Park Three: Black People in Prison, by R. Phillips: Repression in St. Vincent: Interview with a Chilean Worker

*July:* The Strike at Imperial Typewriters: Immigrant Workers in the Catering Industry: Indian Railway Strike

*August:* Black Women & Nursing A Job like any Other: Imperial Typewriters Strike, The Continuing Story: Class & Nationalism in Africa

*September:* Bengali Squat in the East End: Back to Work at Imperial Typewriters: Murder Trial in Dominica: European Immigrant Workers

*October:* Two Worlds in Conflict: Carnival in a Strange Land: Chile, The working Class Road to Socialism: Attack on the Sixth Pan African Congress

*November:* Which Way Black America? Outlaw & Disorder (West Indian barrister suspended): The Charter Flight Hustle

*December:* The Tribals of India, by Farrukh Dhondy: Islington CRC Scandal: Defeat of the Kenilworth Strike: T & G Report, Imperial Typewriters Strike

## 1975

*January:* One Year Later: Puerto Rico, The Next Vietnam? Who's Afraid of Ghetto Schools? Busing in Ealing: It Dread in Dominica

*February:* Caboo, the Making of a Caribbean Artist: The Police and the Black Wageless: Senegal to France, an Immigrants' Journey

*March:* The Closure at Imperial Typewriters: Independence Struggle in Guyane: Whose Interest will the Movement Serve (report on the Conference 'Black People which way Forward')

*April:* On the Railroad to Power, the Indian Railway Strike: Trinidadians Revolt: The Black Youth Speak

*May:* Caribbean Women & the Black Community: Terror in the East End

*June:* Black Employment in the Black Country: Black Panthers in Israel: Trinidad in Revolt

*July:* The Immigrant Worker in Europe

*August:* The Black Education Movement & the Struggle for Power: East End Housing Hustle

*September:* Immigration Policy, Keep Dependents Out: Libel Threat against *Race Today*:

*October:* The Caribbean in Revolt: Gunning for a Wage: Victory on Appeal, Ryan David Must Go: Nationwide Comes to the East End

*November:* Black Wageless in Detroit: CRC Official Arrested: Trials of the Cricklewood 12 & the Stockwell 10

*December:* Chapeltown Belongs to Us: Lewisham Liaison Scheme in Ruins: East End Housing Campaign: Blacks In the Police Force? Burnham & Jagan hand in Glove

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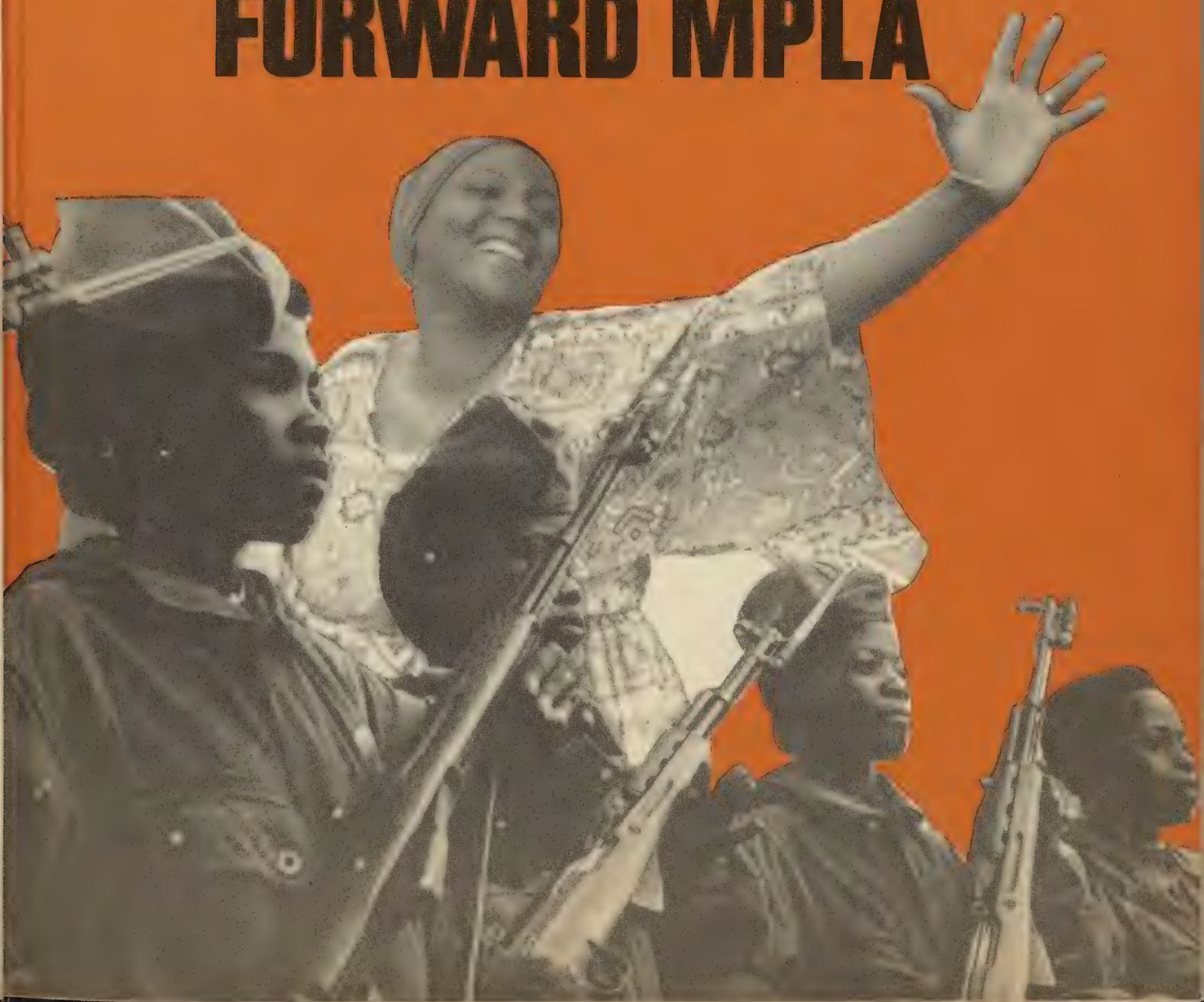
RACE TODAY PUBLICATIONS



# Race Today

FEBRUARY 1976 25p.

**FREE DESMOND TROTTER  
DON'T STOP THE CARNIVAL  
FORWARD MPLA**





# LETTERS

## ADVICE AND CONTROL

*Dear Race Today,*

In your review of the good work done by JCWI as set out in its Annual Report, you referred to the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service as being 'government funded and controlled'.

Yes, we do receive a grant from government to assist us in representing before appeals adjudicators people who believe they have been unfairly treated by the immigration authorities, but we are no more 'controlled' by the government than JCWI is controlled by the British Council of Churches or *Race Today* is controlled by the World Council of Churches.

We run ten offices around the country where immigrants and others can obtain advice or representation and 32,000 came to see us during the past year.

Immigrants and ethnic minorities face so many problems in Britain today that there is plenty for both JCWI and UKIAS to do.

John Ennals

Director

United Kingdom Immigrants  
Advisory Service.

## FORWARD TO 1976

*Dear Race Today,*

Your publication is in the front-line in the fight against racism and oppression, and I hope that it remains as dynamic as it has been in 1975.

Eric Bascombe

York.

## FIGHTING CLOSURE IN LIVERPOOL

*Dear Race Today,*

The Liverpool 8 community would like to keep the rest of England informed about the situation in the north west. There are few facilities available for blacks in Liverpool. The Rialto has been trying to fulfil this role, by making available a centre which the local black community can use as a base.

It now provides a nursery, junior/senior youth club and adult activities. It is open seven days per week for community use. It is the one place where the unemployed youth can go. The Rialto has existed for years and has finally reached the stage of growing local participation, particularly from organisations in and around Liverpool 8.

Now we are faced with a grave situation, whereby the centre is threatened with a curtailment of their activities. The Education Committee is attempting to close down the centre during the day. This will, in effect, reduce what is a rapidly growing community centre into a youth club. We in the community at large are determined to prevent this. Our situation has been made difficult due to the Education Committee's control and their lack of cooperation. They have neither informed us of the reason for their decisions, nor have they consulted us in any way. On December 17th, the city council will meet to deal with the proposal of the committee. We have petitioned and will lobby.

We are asking for:

1. Consultations between the Education Committee and the Management of Rialto.
  2. A six-month respite.
  3. Guidance and advice in administration.
- Bureaucracy is confusing to us all.

We feel these demands are crucial to our survival. They will halt future plans for the development of the centre as we hope in the coming year to open the first floor for the provision of cultural and welfare facilities.

Rialto Community Centre,  
Liverpool 8.

Vol. 8    Number 2.    February 1976

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# EDITORIAL

## ON ANGOLA

Central to the development of the modern world have been the struggles of formerly colonial peoples for their independence. Gandhi led the revolt of the Indian peoples, Nkrumah stamped his personality on the process as it engulfed Africa and the Caribbean islands followed in the wake of this enormous international upheaval.

Today, the peoples of Angola are waging probably the fiercest, most ferocious of struggles in this particular historical tradition. Like in Guinea Bissau and Mozambique, these battles distinguish themselves in form and content from the independence movements that preceded them.

The most important difference lies in the separation between political and economic independence. Earlier independence struggles have been plagued by that separation. 'Seek ye first the political kingdom, and the rest will follow thereafter', best describes the strategy of those earlier movements. In the wake of rebellions of masses of workers and peasants, political independence was peacefully negotiated, and the social liberation of the population postponed.

The mess in which African countries have found themselves, Indira Gandhi's latest definition of democracy and the barbarism of the rulers in the Caribbean are concrete examples of the degeneration of that movement.

It is with that experience at hand that the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau took the international stage. Here the struggles for political and economic independence are one. Here the independence of these territories are inseparable from the control by the people of their natural resources. The struggle for independence is the struggle for socialism.

Not that the political tendency which represents the earlier strategy is dead. In Guinea Bissau and Mozambique, the revolutionary tendency was strong enough to eliminate its opposite in the early stages. Not so Angola. In this vast country, a fight for economic independence involves high stakes. U.S., Belgium, British, German and Austrian finance capital flooded into Angola after 1962. Coffee, diamonds, iron mining and oil brought to Angola multi-nationals like the Krupp group of Essens, the Companhia Miniera do Loboto (SARL), Petrofina, Gulf Oil, Chase National Bank, National City Bank, Standard Oil. The list is endless.

With the socialist oriented MPLA clearly the dominant political force in the country, obviously a threat to these vast multi-nationals, the opposite political tendency attracted the support of the C.I.A. and other western imperialist governments.

Where the tendency which defined the independence struggle as exclusively political was progressive in the 1950's, today they represent reaction in the extreme. It is not independence as such that the

imperialist nations are against. They give that at the drop of a hat. Independence yes — total social liberation, not at all.

Today, where ever black people are waging struggles against colonialism, the two tendencies described above rear their heads. In technical terms, they are described as revolutionary on the one hand and reformist on the other.

On a different terrain the question may not be posed in the same way but the tendencies remain clearly recognisable. Take Britain for instance. Handsworth, Notting Hill, Brixton, Southall are colonies and the struggles which emerge from within these enclaves are clearly anti-colonial in content. The fact that we, the colonised, are a minority in the society, combined with the peculiar circumstances of our colonisation would make nonsense of any description of our struggles as struggles for independence.

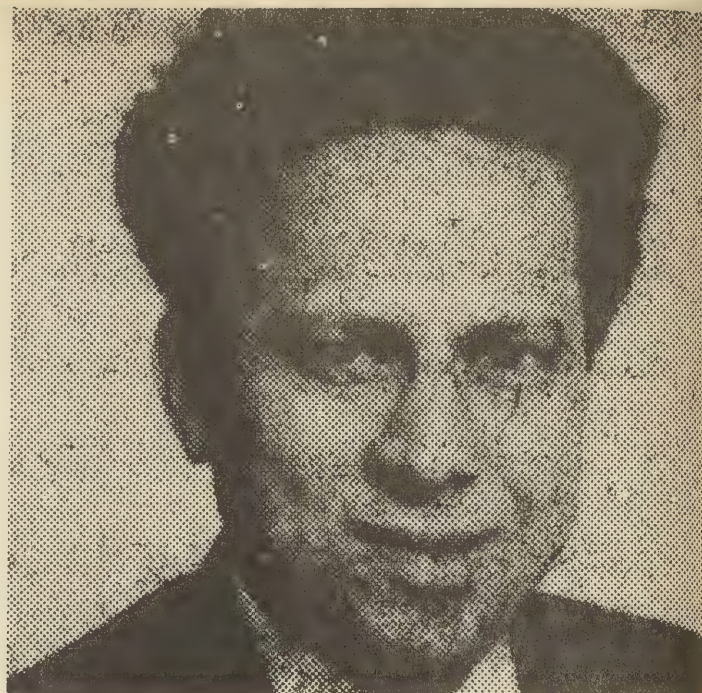
The question that brings to the fore the reformist tendencies on the one hand and the revolutionary tendency on the other is whether our struggles for more this or more that, or against this or that are at once struggles for socialism; whether our independent organisational forms must at some stage coalesce with those of white workers in a struggle for a socialist society in Britain. We either have this as our perspective or we view our struggles as energy for a series of project hatching activities in which we talk about self reliance while at the same time pleading for urban aid and CRC grants.

The reformist tendency in the black communities in Britain are the black nationalist groups. They may somersault from their previous support of UNITA and now proclaim support for MPLA in Angola. But that does not make them revolutionary, merely opportunists. Who you support in Angola is not test of what your politics are. It is what you do in Britain that informs your true political position on Angola.

Race Today Collective      February 1976.



## BHUIYA COMMITTED FOR TRIAL



Abu Bhuiya, field officer for the local Tower Hamlets Community Relations Council, appeared at Thames Magistrate's Court on Monday January 26th. It was his third appearance on a charge of defrauding a Bengali worker, Abdul Jobber of £156.

*Race Today* first published allegations of Bhuiya's conduct towards Jobber in the August 1975 issue. Bhuiya at once threatened a libel suit against *Race Today*. In a letter to us from his solicitors, Sayani & Co, they referred to our article, 'East End Housing Hustle', as containing a series of falsehoods. The article charged that Bhuiya acted in concert with a West Indian named Ferron to defraud Jobber. His solicitors replied, "*Although our client knows the person named in the article as Abdul Jobber, he has no knowledge of the persons called Ferron or Sammy*". We know now that Ferron does exist, for he joined Bhuiya in the dock on January 26th to answer the joint charge of defrauding Jobber. They were both committed to the Crown Court for trial.

Meanwhile Bhuiya continues his job as field officer for the Tower Hamlets C.R.C. That organisation, registered as a charity under the title Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets, recently published its annual report, 1974-1975. One expected that some mention would be made of the arrest of their field officer. Not a word. They manage though, to admit that "(Housing) is the most sensitive area of our work", yet they record only two meetings in an entire year with housing authorities, some private landlords and some complainants. The dates, they tell us, were not suitable for officers of the local Tower Hamlets Council, the body responsible for housing Bengalis in the area. They add to this report a series of vague promises from the G.L.C. and the local police, not one of which has been effectively implemented.

### COUNCIL OF CITIZENS OF TOWER HAMLETS

#### BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31st MARCH, 1975.

31-3-74 £					31-3-75 £
	ASSETS				
336	Bank Balances and Cash	...	...		2,356
	Debtors and Prepayments:				
	C.R.C. grant towards new offices	...	...	300	
22	Insurance Prepayment	...	...	30	
230	Other Debtors	...	...	—	
588	Less	...	...	330	330
					2,686
	CREDITORS:				
20	Rent	...	...	31	
—	Inland Revenue	...	...	767	
35	Telephone	...	...	172	
61	Other Creditors	...	...	—	
	Other Liabilities:				
529	C.R.C. Supplementary Grant Outstanding	...	...	605	
750	Loan through Toynbee Hall	...	...	750	
767				2,325	2,325
					361
	C.C.T.H. Main Fund:				
1,552	Adverse balance forward	...	...		1,017
535	Less surplus 1975	...	...		591
1,017					426
	C.C.T.H. Project Account Fund:				
	Legal Advice Centre				
	Income, 1974/75	...	...	1,426	
	Expenditure, 1974/75	...	...	639	
				787	
250	Other Projects	...	...		787
767					361



## LINKING THE STRUGGLES

*Race Today's* campaign on the housing issue among Bengalis in that area reveals an almost criminal neglect by the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets. They have spent in the year 1974/1975, £14,244 of public money. Salaries for the staff amount to £9,587. In that period, the housing conditions of Bengalis have deteriorated considerably. Bribery, intimidation and fraud on the housing issue undermine the fabric of Bengali social life in the East End of London.

The most recent case to come to light illustrates and underlines a particular aspect of this harassment. In December, three Bengali families, now living at 6 Palm Street, were visited by Tower Hamlets Health Department officials who asked them to vacate the premises immediately, as there was a closing order on the house. Mr Jobed Ali, one of the tenants of the house, informed the health officials that they rented the place from a Mr. Abdul Lateef. The Health Department officials told them that the house did not belong to Mr. Lateef and that they were squatters on the premises. The officials made it clear that the house, though still privately owned (not by Lateef), was under Compulsory Purchase Order.

Mr Jobed Ali contacted *Race Today* and the Tower Hamlet's Squatter's Union when he realised that he had been rented a squat by Lateef. The families refused to pay the rent the next time Lateef called and told him that they knew he had conned them. They had been let into the property by Lateef in August last year and had assumed that it was his house as he was known to have other property and to have owned a local cinema. Lateef already had furniture in the place and agreed to rebuild the two rooms in the house that had been gutted by fire before Mr. Jobed Ali and his family and the others moved in.

When we phoned the Health Department at Tower Hamlets, Mr Ross told us that he had spoken to Lateef and asked him to stop taking rent, and that he had also asked Lateef to 'evict' Mr Jobed Ali, Mr. Islam and their families. Lateef then sent an illegal 'notice to quit'. He also suggested to the occupants of the house that he could get them squatted in a council flat. The families refused to leave Palm Street, as they were aware that the GLC and Tower Hamlets have undertaken to house families who are evicted from compulsorily purchased housing.

Mr. Lateef has not been brought to book by any of the authorities, including the GLC, the Health Department of the Tower Hamlets Borough Council. It is up to Mr. Ross and the Health Department of Tower Hamlets to publicly explain why they attempted to use a man who they knew was racketeering in squatted property to evict three homeless families.

## HOSTILE WITNESSES

Desmond Wilson, a 20 year old West Indian youth, was sentenced to life imprisonment for knifing to death P.C. Green of the Birmingham police. The trial at the Birmingham Crown Court was witnessed by a packed public gallery. Several members of the black community were turned away, for the court could hold no more. Solidarity with Wilson was strong.

The stabbing took place outside the Rainbow Suite in downtown Birmingham on the 18th of July 1975. It was reggae night and as usual there were scores of young blacks about. P.C. Green was identified by most of the youth as a constant source of harassment to them. On that evening Green attempted to disarm young brother Foskin of a knife. Foskin would not have it and was aided in his resistance by others. In the ensuing melee, P.C. Green fell victim to a stab wound.

Wilson, in a statement from the dock, told the court that he was given the knife by a friend for safe keeping. He did not intend stabbing Green. He would not go into the witness box to give evidence because his poor reading and writing ability would make him vulnerable, unfairly so, to intense professional cross examination.

On the night of the stabbing, several hundred blacks were rounded up throughout Birmingham. Statements were taken from the unwilling with little care for procedure. Several of the witnesses for the prosecution were those who gave statements in this way. The prosecution took the unprecedented step in declaring some of their own witnesses hostile. They could not it seems, rely on young blacks 'to swear Wilson away.'

Faced with two possible verdicts, murder and manslaughter, the jury chose the former. After sentencing Wilson to life, the Judge recommended that there be further investigations into the conduct of the hostile witnesses. He had in mind possible charges of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

## POLICE INVESTIGATE POLICE

Following the arrest of Cliff McDaniel on trumped up charges brought against him by PC Ryan David of the Hornsey Police, the Black Parents Movement and the Black Students Movement have been demanding the expulsion of P.C. Ryan David from the Metropolitan Police. Cliff McDaniel was attacked and arrested by Ryan David just a few yards from his school in April last year, and charged with insult-



# LINKING THE STRUGGLES

## UNDER OATH

ing behaviour and assault on police (Ryan David.) Cliff was found guilty at Highgate Magistrate's Court in June and later cleared by Judge Eade when the appeal was heard at Middlesex Crown Court in October 1975. Judge Eade invited the authorities to investigate the allegations of police violence.

Once Cliff was cleared, both the Black Parents Movement and the Black Students Movement wrote to the Home Secretary, the Commissioner of Police drawing their attention to Judge Eade's remarks. The Home Secretary referred the matter to the Commissioner of Police, who then appointed Chief Inspector Roddy of Mill Hill Police Station to investigate the complaint.

The Black Students and Black Parents Movement submitted to Roddy the statements of the witnesses who gave evidence at the trial. On two consecutive Wednesdays, January 7th and 14th 1976, Inspector Roddy interviewed the principal witnesses and their parents in the presence of a delegation from both movements. The organisations were informed on the 14th January that the first part of the investigation was complete. Only investigations relating to the police officers concerned remained to be done.

B.P.M. and B.S.M. also demanded of the Haringey Borough Council that the Council set up an investigation into the conduct of the police officers involved. This investigation, the movements suggested, must

The following is a statement made under oath by Sergeant David Croll of the St. Ann's Road police station, Tottenham. He is giving evidence against Garnett Gibson, a 22 year old West Indian youth charged with causing him actual bodily harm.

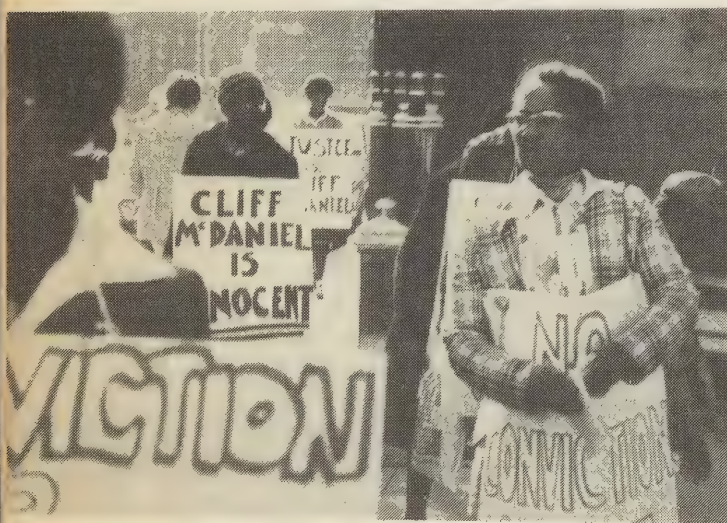
"... When we reached the gaoler's door Gibson said, 'Can I have my property back?' I replied, 'No, not until after the case'. It was just a normal conversation, no angry tone. ... As soon as I finished saying this, he punched me with his right fist on my jaw."

The situation is a familiar one, police officer versus West Indian youth. Garnett Gibson is on trial charged with assault, causing bodily harm to Sgt. Croll of the Tottenham police.

The conflict begins when Croll arrests Gibson as he is returning home from a disco in North London at 2 am. He charges him with loitering with intent. Gibson appears at Tottenham Magistrates Court on the same day. Sgt Croll objects to bail on the grounds that Gibson is likely to abscond. The Magistrate complies and sends Gibson to Ashford Remand Home. The assault is said to have taken place as Croll escorted Gibson to the cells.

Gibson first appears on the assault charge at Middlesex Crown Court on 14th November. Under oath, Sgt Croll is certain of his facts. Gibson hit him with his right hand for no apparent reason. Gibson, on the other hand, is not as sure. He does not remember which hand Croll struck him with. What he does remember is that he hit back in self defence. He relates the events as follows. On his way to the cells from the court room, Sgt. Croll twists his arm. He complains and Croll responds by punching him in the face. When he sees that Croll is about to hit him again, he hits back and is then surrounded by six police officers. He finds out about the additional assault charge one week later. He calls his social worker, Mrs. Heath, to give evidence on his behalf. She recalls visiting him just after he is locked in the cells. She is not allowed to go inside, but through the cell door hole sees his bruised flesh and blood below his left eye. She asks if Gibson would get medical treatment and is assured by Croll that he will. This did not happen.

Sgt. Croll brings along two of his colleagues, Sgt. Medcalfe and Det. Con. Dickins to support the story that Gibson hit him severely for no apparent reason. He also produces medical evidence to the effect that he took a week off work because of his injuries. All three police officers state, under oath, that they saw no sign of blood or injury on Gibson's face. The jury faced with two violently conflicting stories could not decide and the case was sent for a re-trial.



Julian Stapleton.

be set up in consultation with them. The Haringey Council, while sympathetic to the request, pointed out the real difficulty against such a course of action. There was no legislative basis for a local authority to set up a public enquiry of the kind demanded. They could not, for example, compel witnesses to give evidence. However, Councillor Ware drew the movements' attention to the fact that, at an earlier stage, an attempt to move a motion at the council assembly deploring Cliff's arrest was defeated by the subjudice rules.

Councillor Ware is now suggesting instead that the members of the council make representations to the chairman of the House of Commons Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration to take evidence in Haringey as to the facts surrounding the circumstances of the Cliff McDaniel case.



## LINKING THE STRUGGLES

When the case was re-heard, on January 15th, the same witnesses appear but the prosecution produces an additional witness, Mr. Russell, a white barrister. He tells the court that he is in the corridor with a client and witnesses the scuffle between Gibson and several officers. Gibson sticks to his original story, he hit the police

officer in self defence.

This time the jury, which includes two black women has no difficulty in reaching a verdict, no difficulty in deciding who they think is lying. Garnett Gibson was found not guilty of causing actual bodily harm to Sgt. David Croll.

# 'GHOST' MIGRANT SCANDAL STARTS STORM

By JOHN HILL

FIVE of every six immigrants working in cafes, restaurants and hotels may be doing so illegally, says a report which leaked out yesterday.

They either should not be here at all or their work permits have expired, says the report by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

The report was to have been submitted in confidence — to the Home Office. And the council were furious when it leaked out yesterday in the trade journal *Catering Times*.

Their deputy secretary Miss Sue Joel said: "The results were not necessarily to go to the Press."

She claimed the council knew of cases where agents, working in league with employers, charged immigrants up to £100 to get jobs in Britain.

The council interviewed 330 immigrant catering workers in London.

Only 16 per cent of them claimed they had permits to work in Britain.

### Cards

The rest admitted: "We are illegal immigrants. We have over-

## 'ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS'

Illegal immigrants take jobs from British workers. For two days sections of the national press warmed to this theme.

'The Illegal Immigrants of London' (*Evening News*, 8.1.76), 'Ghost Migrant Scandal' (*Sun* 9.1.76), 'Immigrant Survey Shocks Caterers' (*Guardian* 9.1.76), 'The Illegal Workers in London Cafes — 84% No Right To Be Here' (*Evening Standard* 8.1.76), 'Illegals In Spotlight' (*Catering Times* 8.1.76).

The industry in question is catering. Large numbers of foreign workers — Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Southern Italian and Greek — are recruited every year to work on a contract basis in the British Catering industry. The quota for this foreign supply of workers is negotiated yearly between the British Hotels, Restaurants and Caterer's Association (BHRCA), the Department of Employment and the Unions. In 1975, they negotiated a quota of 8,500 workers. This year the employers are demanding 10,000 heads.

The newspapers moved in on an article which appeared in the trade journal, *the Catering Times* published on January 8th 1976. The article was based on research carried out by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI). In a sample questionnaire, 330 foreign workers in catering answered questions on pay, conditions and recruitment. 84% of the 330 workers who filled in the questionnaire stated that they had no work permits.

The London evening newspapers of the same day — *The Evening Standard* and *The Evening News* — scooped the story and gave it front page prominence. They made no attempt to inform the public that the workers were in Britain *legally* and their employers were in the process of negotiating permits. Racist sentiments rather than facts governed the reporting.

*The News of the World* had to wait until the following Sunday to get into the act. With characteristic boldness, they launched in with this headline: 'Union Seeks Foreign Worker Curbs.' The article then began, "A major union is trying to halt



# Evening Standard

LATE  
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10p

London Thursday January 8 1976

'84% no right to be here'—says new survey

## THE ILLEGAL WORKERS IN LONDON CAFES

By Robert Langton

EIGHTY FOUR per cent of immigrant workers in London hotels, restaurants and cafes are either illegal immigrants or have overstayed their time, says a recent survey.

The unpublished survey by the Joint Catering Industry Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) found that 84 per cent of the 1,000 workers surveyed were either illegal immigrants or had overstayed their visas.

Only 16 per cent of those surveyed were British workers. The survey also found that 10 per cent of the workers were employed in the catering industry for less than a year.

### Illegal immigrants

(Continued from Page 1)

The survey also found that 10 per cent of the workers were employed in the catering industry for less than a year. The survey also found that 10 per cent of the workers were employed in the catering industry for less than a year.

the flood of foreigners snapping up jobs in the hotel and catering trade". John Stevens, an official of the Transport and General Workers Union, backs up this racist smear; "We feel the jobs (in catering) should be made available to British unemployed."

The truth lies elsewhere says Clive Derby, chief executive of BHRCA. "If we could be guaranteed that unemployed British workers would come into industry and relocate, we would have some sympathy with the point of view expressed. But history shows they do not move."

British workers have refused the low pay and long hours attached to jobs in catering. No worker in Britain, including immigrant blacks, unless he/she is defeated and demoralised, would work for £30 for a 100 hour week. British workers have won

more for themselves on the dole. The shortage of labour in catering which leads to the importation of immigrant labour is a direct consequence of a permanent strike of the British working class against the pay and conditions in catering.

Not that the immigrants quietly accept these conditions. They have to in the first instance. There is no other alternative to the demoralisation of the wagelessness in rural Europe. In the last two years though, these workers have been involved in numerous strikes for increases in the wage, better working conditions and the regularising of their status. And in almost all these struggles, they have had to fight the unions as well as management. Guess which union has been the major culprit? John Stevens' Union, the T & GWU.



### A WORKING CLASS PARTY IN TRINAGO

Early in 1975, oil workers, sugar-cane workers and cane farmers brought the national economy of Trinidad and Tobago to a halt in a co-ordinated strike movement. The general councils of all three unions together with the Transport and Industrial Workers Union, at the height of the strike movement, formed themselves into a single body, the United Labour Front (U.L.F.). At a mass meeting of some 30,000 workers and farmers on February 18th 1975, the U.L.F. was publicly launched. The mass meeting passed a resolution demanding the withdrawal of multi-nationals from the country.

On January 3rd and 4th, a conference of shop stewards and branch officers of all four unions was called. For two days the delegates debated and discussed the political situation in the country and the way forward for the U.L.F.

A unanimous sentiment ran through the conference — the present political regime under the leadership of Dr Eric Williams had to go. On this everyone was agreed. The platform, made up of the leadership of the U.L.F, called on the meeting to discuss the implications of and take a decision on the formation of an independent working class political organisation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Finally, the delegates took the decision, in a



#### THE MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP'S

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good bookshops.

resolution, to form a working class political party.

The resolution reads as follows:

*"Whereas this assembly of shop stewards and branch officers of affiliates of the U.L.F recognises that there is no party of the working class today in Trinidad and Tobago.*

*And Whereas this assembly recognises the crying need for and the historical inevitability of workers as a class belonging and giving their allegiance to a party of their own creation.*

*Be it resolved that the United Labour Front, while not sacrificing the unity it represents, takes all necessary steps to bring into being a party of the working class, distinct in character, committed to the unity of workers as a class and to the advancement of the particular interests of the workers and of the people of Trinago (Trinidad and Tobago) generally.*

Another conference is scheduled for February 1st when the structure of the party will be discussed and the organisation formally launched.



# FREE DESMOND TROTTER

Desmond Trotter is 20 years old. In this brief life span, he emerged in the Caribbean Island, Dominica, in the leadership of the unemployed protest movement which swept through the Caribbean islands in the early 1970's.

At the height of that movement, a white American tourist was shot and killed in the capital, Roseau. That was on February 26/27th 1974. On the evening of February 24th, two young, white American tourists were severely beaten and chopped at their camp in the village of Marigot.

The police force was instantly mobilised and set in motion against the unemployed. Politicians gave their platforms to identifying the youth movement as subversive. The 'Dreads' were to be hounded out of existence. (The term 'Dread' describes those youths who adopted the Rastafarian hair-style.)

Trotter was arrested and charged for the murder of Jirasek, the tourist. The evidence against him centered mainly around the statement of a 16 year old Antiguan woman, Carmilla Francis (See *Race Today* January 1975.) At the trial, she gave evidence to the effect that this total stranger, Desmond

Trotter, approached her with the boast that he had just killed a white man. She later retracted the statement at the chambers of an Antiguan barrister, Tim Kendall. Trotter was subsequently found guilty and sentenced to death. At the Appeal Court, his sentence was confirmed, with one judge dissenting. A further appeal now stands before the Privy Council in London and is due for hearing any day now.

Whatever the court decides, there is an overwhelming belief, which informs the Free Desmond Trotter Movement throughout the Caribbean and in the immigrant communities of Canada, Britain and the United States, that Desmond Trotter was framed. A recently published pamphlet, *The Queen vs Desmond Trotter* by Tony Gilbert, (10p) details the evidence advanced at the trial, with the gross inconsistencies in the prosecution's case. The pamphlet, in effect, uncovers the frame up.

Thousands of letters of protest, the details of numerous public meetings and demonstrations in support of Trotter have reached the Premier of Dominica, Patrick John who is recently given to dressing up in military uniform. He wants now to be referred to as Colonel John.

On a recent visit to Britain, his Minister of Lands, Fisheries, Agriculture and Cooperatives, Michael Douglas gave his government's reply in an interview with *West Indian World*.

"But if the law says that Desmond Trotter is guilty, he will most definitely be hung. That is the law of the land. It is as simple as that, or as difficult as that, whichever way you look at it". *West Indian World* (30.10.75.)

Copies of *The Queen v Desmond Trotter* by Tony Gilbert from — Liberation, 313-315 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

In a letter to *Race Today*, written from his condemned cell, Trotter outlines the background of the movement in which he is involved and the attacks on that movement by the state:

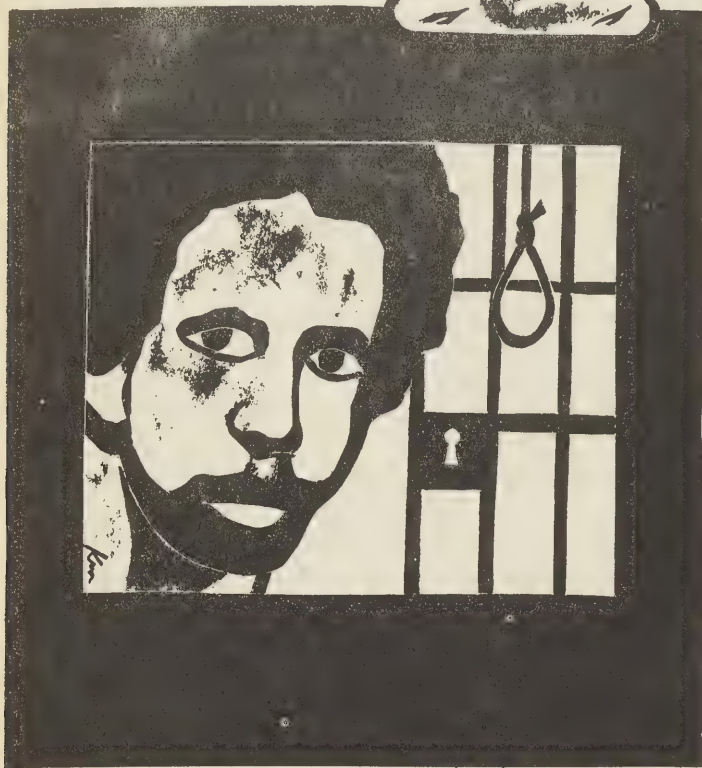
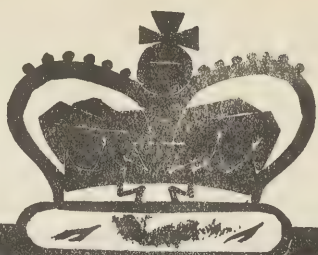
In Hell,  
H.M. Prisons,  
Stock Farm,  
Goodwill,  
Dominica  
20.1.76.

*Salamu Race Today,*

... From the late 60's, people in Dominica, like in the other islands of the Caribbean, have become increasingly aware of their identity as well as the uselessness of the system under which they have been forced to live. Armed with this consciousness, they sought through demonstrations, rallies and meetings to make known their grievances in attempts at achieving meaningful change. The changes which were implemented as a result were only superficial. From the early 70's, the more enlightened of the working class sought, through their own efforts, to rectify this situation. It is out of this that the love of Rastafari emerged.

Rastafari found roots among the growing number of school leavers who were unable to find any means of survival within the system, along with the chronically unemployed brethren. The message of Rastafari stressed self-reliance and self sufficiency based on the co-operative development of the





land and its resources. Recognition of mankind's africanism and its relation to I & I daily existence were also stressed. Mankind also stressed the existence of the most high, Jah Rastafari, and the duty upon mankind, as his children, to dedicate themselves to a life of truth and righteousness and an uncompromising fight against all forms of oppression, exploitation and corruption.

This movement is based in the youth who are alive with vitality and creative thought... From all parts of the country, mankind began to forward into Zion, setting up shacks, clearing the land and settling down to work. The impact of this was tremendous amongst the peasants, for they saw a love amongst mankind which was lacking amongst themselves. . . The struggles of the peasants began to take on a new dimension. No longer were they groaning over their ills, they began to act.

In February of 1974, Grand Bay in the south of the island exploded. Geneva estate, a 1,000 acres in size, owned by a Syrian merchant, Nassief and which represents the most arable land in that area was seized by the villagers. The estate house was burnt, cattle slaughtered, warehouses destroyed and portions of land cleared for cultivation. Barri- cades were set up and the people began to consolidate their gains. A State of Emergency was declared in the area and the police and Defence Forces swarmed in. Several brethren were arrested, the people were driven from the land and the armed forces occupied it for the next three months during which time the government bought it over.

From then onwards, Babylon began a reign of terror against mankind. They harassed I & I off the streets, hunted mankind down in Zion and whenever they came across our shacks they destroyed them, uprooted our food, seized our tools and burned our clothes. Several brethren were brutally assaulted and not even their children were spared. . . .

Growing numbers began to demand land for production while at the same time making a genuine effort to satisfy their basic needs through their own creativity rather than through imported substitutes. . .

This consciousness was not one which Babylon could allow to go unchecked as it posed a direct threat to their parasitic existence. For it brought to light the gross injustices of land ownership on the island and the exploitative nature of the merchant class. While thousands remain unemployed, over a quarter of the arable land remains idle with a much larger portion owned by just over 15 families. Small farmers produce 90% of the food on no more than 2% of the arable land. Those who constitute the planter class also make up the bulk of the merchant class. . . . Babylon passed the notorious 'Dread Act' which gave them the power to kill off I & I for no other cause than being a Rasta and a term of nine months imprisonment for any captured alive! Twenty-one brethren were jailed under this act. Several were viciously assaulted, their homes ransacked and all possessions seized; several people were beaten for merely wearing a 'tam' and truly it was a 'state of seige'. A consciousness acquired through a process of experience cannot be so easily dis- lodged, and by the time that mankind were released from their nine month jail term in June of 1975, the love of Rastafari began to once more manifest itself. Babylon went on the rampage and unleashed a reign of brutality through- out the country that has still left its terrifying effect on the minds of the people. Youths were the target of their insane brutality, though more elderly people also felt the whip. Two brethren, Ras Conrad Dumas and Ras Peltiu Espnit were brutally gunned down in cold blood, but their vicious- ness had a backlash. Two of their soldiers were killed while hunting down mankind. Immediately after this they declared an 'amnesty.'

Clearly, the 'amnesty' was as a result of local, regional and worldwide condemnation of the many injustices which they were inflicting upon innocent hard working people and the unexpected deaths of two soldiers. The amnesty which was declared in August of 1975, temporarily abolished the 'Dread Act', though it is rumored that a 'Terrorist Act' is to replace it before long. The period of the amnesty, up to the present, saw a decrease in Babylon's repression. They took time out to re-organise their forces. A massive recruitment and training programme has taken place, a 50 man perman- ent army has been formed and over 100 new police recruited to bring the force to well over 400. They have been trained in the use of the most deadly weapons of war - SLR's, SMG's, grenades, tear gas etc. Undoubtedly, a police state is the reality of Dominica today, with the existence of a 'state of seige', at times overt, at times covert.

Ras Shaka (Algie Maffei) and Ras Zaigre (Cecil Havre) continue to waste in jail as a direct result of the in- sane repression unleashed by Babylon almost two years ago. They are serving seven and five years respectively. These brethren need the support of all peace-loving and progressive people in their fight to gain true justice and Freedom. Their only crime has been the fact that they have dared to offer an al- ternative to a society which offers nothing to its youth but the jailhouse, and misery, hunger and disease to those who have laboured all their lives.

Onè Love,  
Ras Kabinda (Desmond Trotter)  
for Rastafari Brethren,

### TAKE TIME OUT TO WRITE THAT LETTER!

The Race Today Collective calls on every one of our sympathetic subscribers and readers to write to both the Premier of Dominica, Patrick John and James Callaghan, Foreign Secretary, (Dominica is an Associated State of Britain), protesting the death sentence served on Desmond Trotter.



"Nor did the Colonial authorities (in Trinidad) allow the festival (Carnival) to develop unchecked. Always in fear of large gatherings of the working class for whatever purpose, slave laws banning gatherings and processions were evoked to destroy Carnival. Riots ensued as the working class defied the ban, subsequently forcing the authorities to concede' *'Carnival in a Strange Land:'* Race Today October 1974.

# DON'T STOP THE CARNIVAL

Councillors representing the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea are calling on the organisers of the West Indian Carnival in Notting Hill to remove the Bank Holiday Festival from the area.

Council officials and the Metropolitan police outlined the official position to the Carnival organisers at a meeting held at the Town Hall on Thursday January 29th. The Carnival celebrations, they claim, have outgrown the neighbourhood. For this general position, they assure us they have the support of a large number of white residents in the area. To this, they add that the noise level, the use of front gardens as toilets and the large numbers of pick-pockets in the area warrant the transfer of Carnival from the streets of Notting Hill to the enclosed White City Stadium. The Council has offered to pay for the hire of White City.

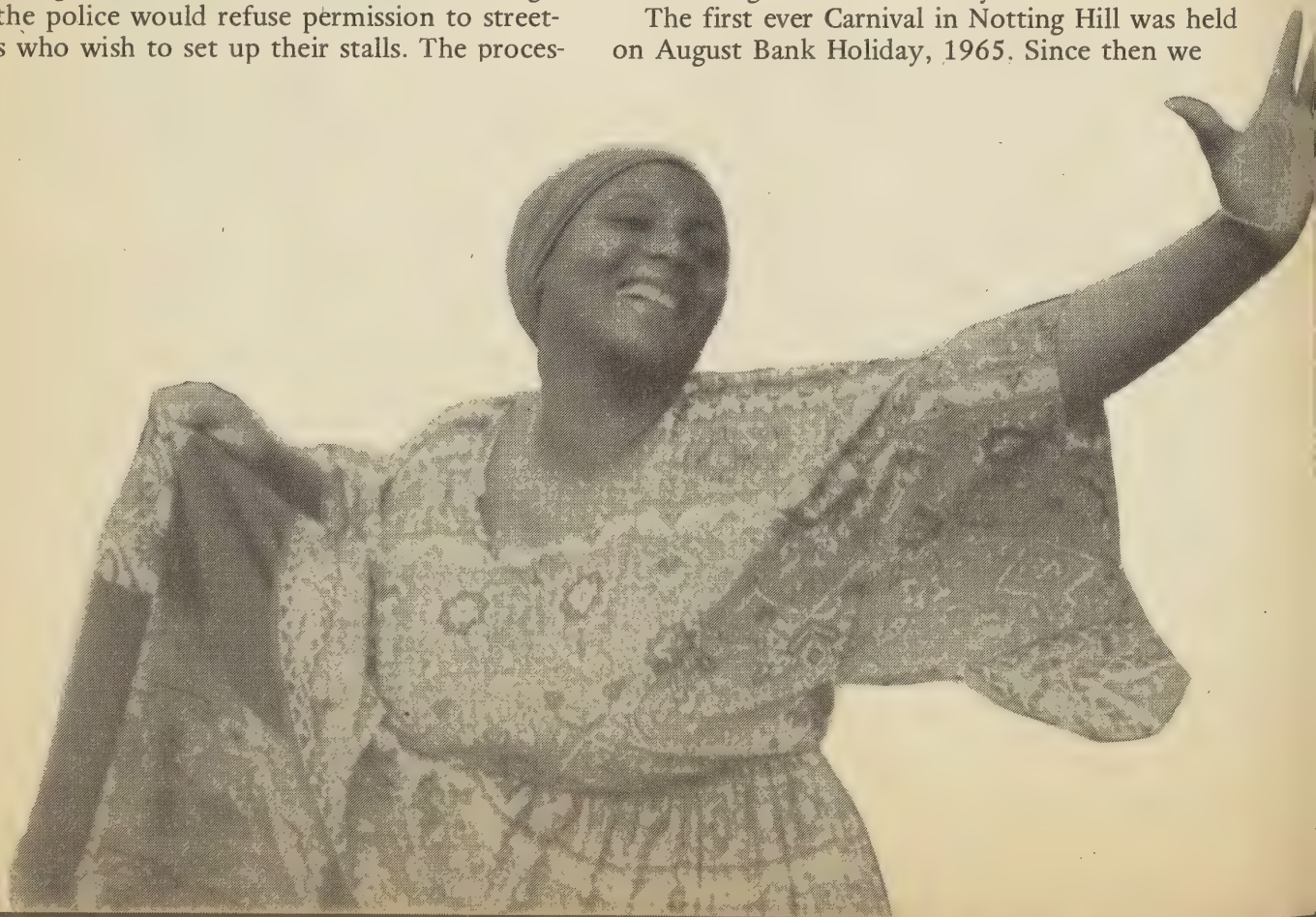
The Metropolitan Police weighed in with threats of their own. Should the organisers insist on holding the festival on the streets of Notting Hill, the police would refuse permission to street-sellers who wish to set up their stalls. The proces-

sion, Chief Supt. Patterson informs us, would parade the streets flanked by lines of policemen and finally, lest there be any doubt, the streets will be heavily policed.

This is the first serious attempt by the authorities to challenge the organisation of Carnival which has proceeded without interruption for the last ten years in Notting Hill. Carnival first appeared in Notting Hill in 1965. The idea originated at the Colherne Pub in West London where, since the late 50's, Trinidadian musicians entertained the West Indian regulars to a combination of calypso and jazz. Nick-named the Sunday School, the success of the Colherne sessions represented the self-organised efforts of West Indians to develop, here in London, forms of national cultural expression. It was this success that spurred the organisers to give Carnival, a Trinidad art form, concrete expression on the streets of London.

Carnival originated in Trinidad. It is a street festival celebrated by Trinidadians on the Monday and Tuesday immediately preceding the Lenten season. Notting Hill was chosen as the venue and with some significance. It is an overwhelmingly black community and associated in the minds of West Indians with the successful fight against white racists in the Notting Hill race riots of 1958. It is in the popular consciousness the closest to being liberated territory.

The first ever Carnival in Notting Hill was held on August Bank Holiday, 1965. Since then we





have celebrated the event yearly. From an initial support of 500 revellers in 1965, the celebrations attracted 250,000 people in 1975, our tenth anniversary. An organising committee of West Indians run the event. They negotiate with the local council for those amenities required over the two day period. A local charitable trust provides facilities for the administration and the organisers discuss with the local police the organisation and order of the festival.

Following last year's event, small murmurs of protest came from white residents. They raised two questions. Firstly, the noise level and secondly, they objected, and reasonably so, to the use of their front gardens as toilets. The press did publicise a photograph of empty wallets recovered by the Notting Hill police, but generally, they too praised the level of organisation and success of the event.

Immediate attempts were made to exploit the protest of the small group of white residents. In September, 1975, a local news sheet, *The Golborne*, began the campaign against Carnival. This populist rag paraded across its pages what they referred to as mounting opposition from the locals. In reality, it was the rantings of opportunist and convicted felon. George Clark, and his small band of failures. Clark has been manoeuvring and dabbling in local politics for some time now with little success. He has an eye for the opportunity, and to this he supplements his contacts among local councillors. Now the councillors have picked up the issue and the battle for the streets of Notting Hill has begun.

Let there be no mistake about this, the West Indian community, 40% of the local population, view the general attitude of the authorities as a distinct attempt to destroy what we have painstakingly created over the last ten years. No one is claiming that the organisation of Carnival is perfect. There have been difficulties, but it is the responsibility of the local authority to which we make an overwhelming financial contribution, to assist us in overcoming these. Rather, they have chosen to use these difficulties to banish the event to White City.

Carnival is a street festival not a Park Fair. To imprison the celebrations in an enclosed area is to destroy the very basis of its structure and organisation. And for what reasons?

The white residents complain about the high level of noise. Here they are referring to the sounds of the steelbands and sound systems. Many of us put up with fire crackers and other loud explosions on Bonfire night, an English event. We have never complained. It is for whites to reciprocate with the same generosity when we have our celebrations.

The objections to using the gardens as toilets are reasonable. The committee has requested the Council to provide portable toilets for the occasion. It is the Council's responsibility on which they have reneged. An increase in the numbers of toilets will surely reduce substantially the use of front gardens.

And finally, the argument about pick-pockets is a non-starter. No more pockets are picked in Notting Hill over Carnival than are picked on Oxford Street and surrounding areas in the Christmas shopping season. Pre-Carnival publicity on Radio, Television and the National Press, warning revellers of that possibility would go a long way in alerting the revellers to the existence of pick-pockets.

One key issue remains, and that is the overcrowding on the streets. Let it be known that following last year's celebrations, many of us were concerned with and discussed among ourselves this very problem. It was felt that the area covered by Carnival be expanded so that Colville, Powis, Golborne and Kensal wards be incorporated as traffic free Carnival territory.

Not one of the objections raised by the officials stands up to scrutiny. What the officials recognise is that future celebrations require a considerable increase in council spending. They obviously are not keen to release funds for the event and will use all the excuses available to get the celebrations out of the area.

When in 1975 we had as our guests some 200,000 people to share the Carnival spirit with us, the Council donated a paltry £200 and the use of six trucks. They choose to destroy Carnival rather than increase substantially the money spent on the celebrations.

We are not seeking charity. Through rates and other taxes we contribute to the upkeep of our borough. We want some of that money back. Alas, that seems hardly possible without a considerable show of our power.

The negotiations have begun, between council officials, the police and the organisers of Carnival. The next meeting is scheduled for later this month. The members of the Carnival committee, in these negotiations, must have as their aim, the uncompromising position that Carnival remain on the streets of Notting Hill in an expanded area. That must be their aim because it represents the attitude of thousands of West Indians throughout Britain. We are not against negotiations aimed at improving the organisation of the event, but there can be no compromise on the venue.

While negotiations are in progress, we need to begin to prepare the mobilization of our tremendous support to confront the authorities on the streets on August Bank Holiday. This is not a matter exclusive to West Indians or blacks in general. We can draw upon large areas of support in the white population.

We negotiate from a position of power, and this is certainly not the first time in the history of Carnival that we have had to put up a struggle to control the streets for the celebrations. In Trinidad, the then colonial authorities sought to impose a ban on Carnival. We fought and won. Let our slogan be, 'Carnival in Notting Hill in 1976.'



If the liberation struggle of the Angolan people for unity and independence is undeniably one of the great dramas of modern history, it is for two kinds of reasons.

The first type of reason is shown by the length of the unfolding of the struggle, the heroism of those who have fought, the martyrdom of so many who have died and the unbelievable ferocity of so many armies of the Portuguese fascist dictatorship. But there are other reasons, even more important, that deserve our attention.

During its years of struggle, Angola became a microcosm of the entire decolonization experience of the African continent. One particular aspect of this process emerges clearly in Angola, where the vision of a different world has been combined with a determination to make this vision real under conditions so difficult that it hardly appeared possible. Despite all the obstacles, this vision of the progress of Angolan nationalism realized itself through the successful growth of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola — MPLA.

The nationalist pioneers saw that the only route to independence was unity. From the start, they called for political action based on a united front

capable of gathering together all sectors of the Angolan population.

But it was not enough to resist the misery of colonialism, they thought. It was still necessary to guide this resistance so that the increasing participation of all the people would make it possible to construct a new society in Angola. They argued that from resistance must be born a nation, a nation forged in the struggle against oppression, a nation determined to be free.

Launched in December 1956, the program of the MPLA advocated the building of political unity as a prelude to resistance, which could then oppose the violence of the colonial system with revolutionary force.

Such a task was difficult to accomplish under the repression and terror of the Portuguese political police which intensified during the fifties. Most Angolans were cut off from news of the outside world. In the towns, fear of retaliation was so great that betrayal was frequent. Moreover, little political work had been accomplished.

Yet the work was undertaken and began to bear fruit. By 1960, the pioneers of MPLA knew that the idea of unity in the struggle to resist the colonial system had gone beyond the narrow circle of a few leaders; it had begun to grow in the hearts and minds of a great number of Angolans.

The Portuguese also understood this, and redoubled their efforts to destroy these ideas and those who spread them. And the Portuguese were not the only ones against the MPLA.

Another trend made its appearance in the ex-





treme north of Angola during the fifties, born of a dynastic dispute between a part of the Bakongo people and the Portuguese authorities.

Agitation among the Bakongos of the region of Sao Salvador led, in 1954, to the formation of a political movement called UPNA (Union of the Peoples of Northern Angola). Its leaders attempted to obtain American support for their cause and sent appeals to the United Nations.

In 1958, they sent one of their leaders, a man who had lived since childhood in Leopoldville (then the capital of the Belgian Congo, now known as Kinshasa, capital of Zaire), to the Pan African Conference in Accra (Ghana). Holden Roberto presented his claim for support there, but he was told that UPNA's was a dynastic and tribal dispute, which would hardly gain the interest of the nationalist parties gathered by Kwame Nkrumah.

Holden then left for the United States, where, it seems, he was received differently.

Although UPNA, which had become UPA, (Union of Angolan Peoples, still later to become the National Front for the Liberation of Angola FNLA), presented itself as a national movement, it remained a tribalist movement dedicated to the personal career and enrichment of Holden. Yet it did find support among those who feared the true nature of Angolan nationalism. The CIA had already recruited Joseph Mobutu, the rising star in the neo-colonial firmament in central Africa. Mobutu and Holden became good friends.

The leaders of MPLA were consistently aware of where the dangers lay. They tried to control Holden, offering agreements of tactical unity which he signed but then denounced in 1960, 1962, 1964 and 1972.

Holden, in fact, remained the instrument of Mobutu, whose position was clear. If Mobutu could not control Angolan nationalism, he would try to destroy it. After the massacres in the first weeks of the struggle in the wake of initial uprisings in 1961, the Portuguese slaughtered thousands of Angolans. While the survivors were regrouping in Leopoldville, Mobutu, Holden and their foreign supporters planned MPLA's destruction. They persecuted the men and women of MPLA and even ordered UPA-FNLA units to attack and destroy MPLA's forces.

By 1963, it had become impossible for the leaders of MPLA to remain in Congo-Leopoldville.

Fortunately in Congo-Brazzaville, north of the

Congo River, the rightist government was overthrown, and MPLA was received there warmly.

During the sixties, as the guerrilla war was organised, MPLA reaffirmed its determination to develop a national movement. But its enemies remained implacable. The Portuguese army and air force intensified their effort to destroy the combat units of MPLA, and gathered the population in concentration camps and "regrouped" villages. Although MPLA was able to fight this war, it was never able to persuade Holden and UPA-FNLA to join its national struggle. Nor was it able to change Mobutu's attitude to total hostility.

Mobutu refused to aid the national struggle in any way, always hoping that Holden would be capable of lifting himself to power on the backs of those who really led the struggle.

Then, on April 25, 1974, Portuguese fascism was overthrown, and things changed. MPLA, wasting no time, began to build a political infrastructure in the populous towns of the west where Mobutu had previously denied MPLA access by closing Zaire's border with Angola. Mobutu's hatred for the MPLA could no longer stop their progress there.

This was the start of the present phase. MPLA rapidly proved it had the massive support of the urban population. Mobutu and Holden turned to gangsterism. They recruited an "army" in Zaire, but by the middle of 1975, MPLA, warmly received by the population, controlled all of the west. Only the deserted regions of the distant north remained to Holden and his "troops."

FNLA tried other diversions, whose principal players became active instruments of international intervention: Jonas Savimbi (leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, UNITA), Daniel Chipenda (defected from the MPLA to become military commander with FNLA), and others, none of which have achieved any great success.

In the midst of all this confusion, the political development of MPLA has maintained a clarity similar to that of PAIGC (the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands), and FRELIMO (the Mozambique Liberation Front), based on concrete Angolan realities.

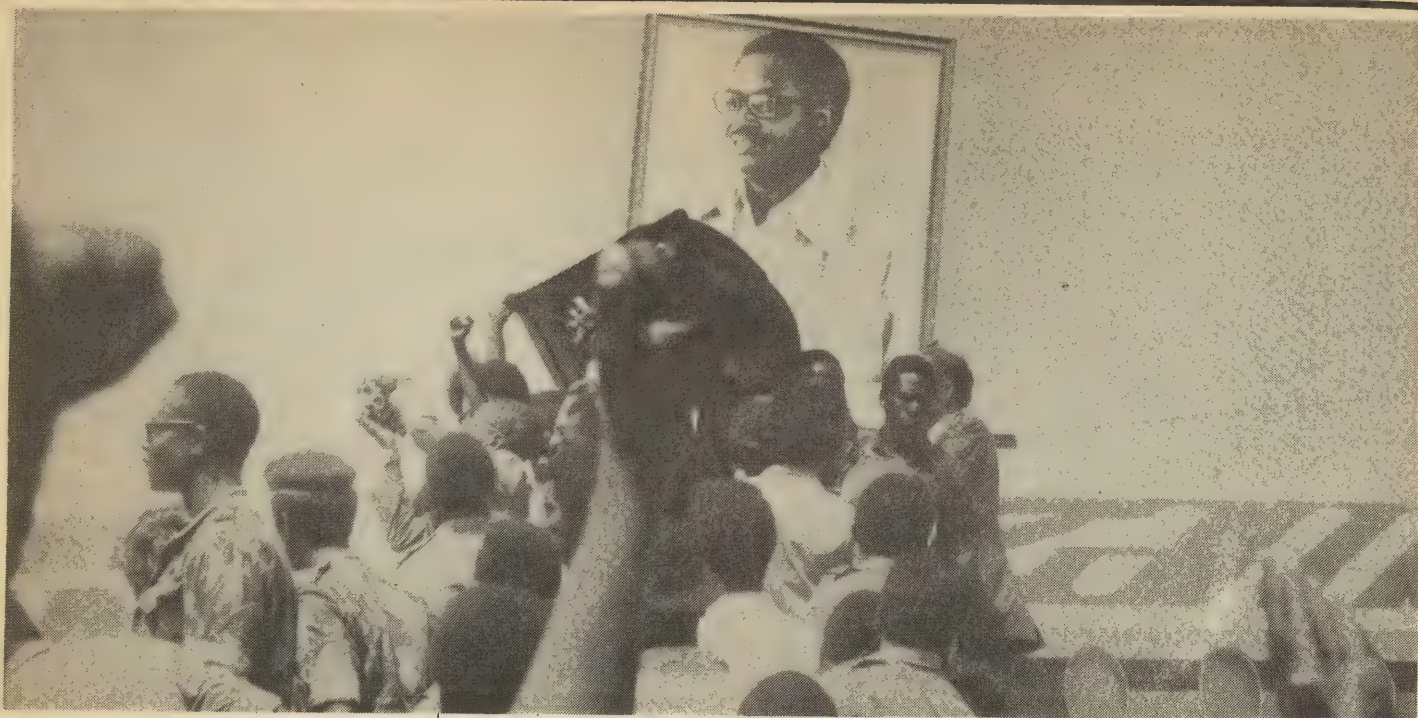
#### POLITICAL CLARITY

This political clarity has saved MPLA from all the storms and has permitted it to pass from reform

# FORWARD MPLA

The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the legitimate government of the Angolan people, is presently involved in a fierce struggle against armed imperialist forces. Basil Davidson, historian and tireless campaigner for the liberation movements on the African continent, outlines the different stages in the history of the M.P.L.A.





to revolution. This was expressed by Agostinho Neto, the movement's president, in 1970: "What we are trying to do is lead a double revolution: a revolution against the colonial system but also a revolution against all the ideas and structures that our people have inherited from our own past and which are no longer able to serve the cause of progress and independence."

Against racism, against neo-colonial betrayal, against its own weaknesses, and in order that the Angolan people should become their own masters all these stages of the struggle emerge clearly in the political declarations, documents, and decisions of MPLA's 19-year history. The rapid and otherwise inexplicable success of MPLA after April, 1974, in winning massive support everywhere throughout the country makes the clarity of MPLA's politics more convincing. And it is this victory that counts, despite the dangers that still exist.

The Portuguese colonial power has left forever, and Mobutu's manoeuvrings will not succeed. The arrogant Holden, chauffeured around in a Mercedes, will follow Mobutu's path. And the \$ 2.5 million recently loaned to Holden without interest by Mobutu's friend, the French president, will not be of much use to him — except to fatten his Swiss bank account.

What truly counts now is that Angola should not become another Congo. The Angolan people, and the MPLA, who have always been able to learn from the difficult lessons, will not permit it.

We can have confidence in a people and in a movement which has shown itself capable of winning an anticolonial war, of sweeping away the agents of imperialism, and of developing a true comprehension of the necessity of unity and progress.

*Reprinted from Liberation News Service*





...BACK

...BACKLASH

BLACKS IN THE POLICE FORCE

*Dear Race Today,*

I read with interest the letters and articles published in *Race Today* concerning the recruitment of black citizens into the police service following the campaign by Sir Robert Mark, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. I believe it is desirable that black people permanently living in this country do feel free and confident to join the ranks of the police forces in this country. Their presence in the force will help to dispel the Powellite myth that black people living in this country present a disastrous and dangerous situation which can only

be remedied by a policy of mass repatriation. Recent opinion polls suggest that the majority of the white British public no longer believe the Powellite solution is either desirable or possible. They believe that black people are here to stay, for better or for worse.

The sight of seeing black faces in police uniforms in cities and towns of this country should be as familiar as seeing black faces in nursing and transport uniforms. Over the last ten years, a large number of black young men and women have joined Her Majesty's armed forces, and given present day economic instability, many more will no doubt volunteer to serve in the Forces. The question must be asked: why is it that the armed forces attract black recruits with very little difficulty whilst the police forces cannot?

One no doubt could give many answers to this state of affairs. I feel that, central to this question is the perception the police have of black people (accepting the fact that they themselves are a minority group) and black people's perception of an all white police force.

The defensiveness, deeply held suspicion and social/racial attitudes with which each view the

WESTERN WORLD 11

Friday, November 7 or Thursday, November 13, 1975

# IS RACIAL PREJUDICE KEEPING YOU OUT OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE?



PC Ronnie Wright

PC John Arose Robinson

WPC Charmaine Trimmingsham

Commissioner Sir Robert Mark



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLAS

other are, in my opinion, major obstacles hindering the recruitment of blacks into the police force.

There is also a belief held by a large number of black people that if anyone from their group were to join the police, not only would they be socially ostracised but also accused of condoning acts of police harassment and brutality against the black population.

These sets of attitudes and beliefs are formidable, but should not be adopted as reasons for discouraging blacks from entering the police service. Blacks who have the confidence to join should receive full hearted support from leaders in the black community in order that they can share and care about the chronic social problems their fellow black citizens face in their daily lives. To deliberately ostracise them and to undermine their authority and confidence is to invite them to take up a hostile attitude towards black citizens, thereby ensuring the racist belief that the only blacks fit to serve in the police force are those prepared to brutalise the black community.

**Paul Stephenson**  
Youth & Community Officer,  
Community Relations Commission.

*Dear Race Today,*

I would like to disagree with CLR James on the question of black people joining the police force. I think he is wrong to argue that anyone should join the force and the reason for that is rooted in class politics not race.

The tasks of the police forces are to protect life and property and be part of the enforcing arm of the state. Protecting life is fine and something that all the citizens should do. Of course there are the brave policemen who rescue children from canals and break up pub fights. There are also citizens who will do the same thing. I take my hat off to them. But that should be the task of us all, and we do not so much need a police force to do that, what we do need is a completely changed set of relationships between each other.

Protecting property is another matter and with 7% of the population owning 84% of the wealth (to use one commonly accepted statistic), it is clear whose property the police are mainly engaged in protecting — and it is not ours. Instead, their role in the protection of property and as the enforcing arm of the state are the same thing; the police enforcement of the prevailing state of property relationships and the system of waged labour which builds that relationship.

For anybody to join them, black or white, idealist or bully, means they have to go over to the

service of capital. I am surprised to see CLR James advocating that course of action. To assume that to make a set of demands about the position of black people in the police is to pose the revolutionary question underestimates the ability of the modern state to absorb such demands and turn them to its own advantage.

Dave Clark.

## DO N'T INTERFERE

*Dear Race Today,*

In response to the backlash, 'Whites and Bonfire Night' in January *Race Today*, I would like to ask of the Chapeltown News Collective, 'What do you hope to gain by interfering in black people's lives?'

A large number of black people of Caribbean and African descent are concentrated in and around the area known as Chapeltown in Leeds. Many of them have lived in the area for well over a quarter of a century. Most of them have suffered under the oppressive hands of the establishment at some time or other.

Many white working class youth and adults live in Chapeltown also. They too have adopted the same racist attitudes towards the black community and generally hold us responsible for the bad housing, poor schools, prostitution and crime committed in the area.

The events of Bonfire Night resulted in the arrest of eleven West Indian youth who were charged with offences against the police. Support for the action of the youth has been demonstrated and will continue.

It is difficult to determine the legitimate role of white activists 'well rooted' in Chapeltown. The Chapeltown News Collective, one such group in a recent editorial printed in their paper concerning the Bonfire Night incident said, 'We believe that the youth must be central to the new organisation that is able to generalise their struggle.' The Chapeltown News Collective is an all white leftist group of opportunists who do not encourage blacks, youth or otherwise to participate in their activities. Yet they deny being racists. Their members are of middle class origin, ex-college and university graduates, who through their own decision choose to live in Chapeltown amongst black people. Their role in the community may not be evident, but their expectations of blacks (like so many of the whites who teach our children in the E.P.S. schools in Chapeltown) are exceptionally low. They have been quoted as saying that blacks in the community are not capable of managing their own affairs, never mind organising themselves into politically motivated groups. Therefore, it is necessary for educated white liberals to look after black people's affairs for them.



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

In Chapeltown, the black community no longer has a voice of its own, if indeed it ever had one. White activists in the area now claim to be the voice of the sufferers in the community. And the sufferers do not have to be consulted before speaking on their behalf.

Black groups in Chapeltown face attack from two specific sides. Firstly, they have to deal with the racist forces which threaten the everyday existence of black people in the community and secondly, the attempts made by white liberal 'do gooders' to further deceive and confuse the black community.

Our historical experience has still not taught us, particularly those of us in Chapeltown, how to detect the 'wolf in sheep clothing.' Whatever information we give out to these activists concerning the community must not in any way endanger lives. Instead, what we should be asking them is this, 'How are you going to use the information you have compiled concerning us, and who gives you the right to work on our behalf?'

Icilma Browne.

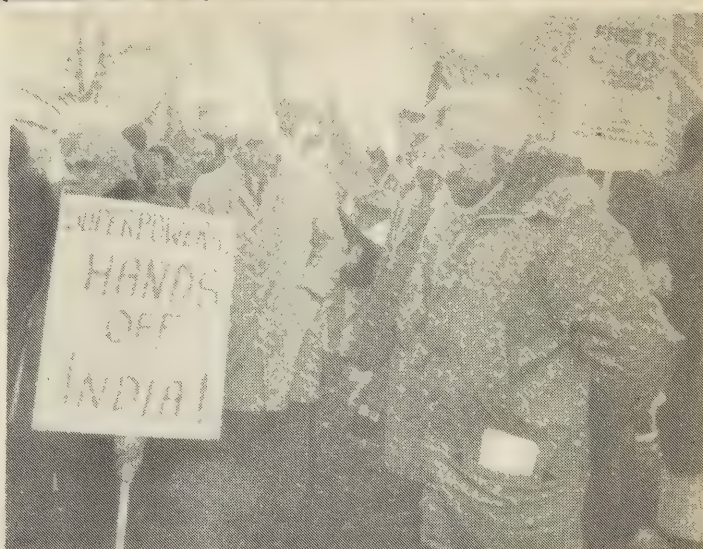
Chapeltown, Leeds.

## FALL OF TAMIL NADU

Your original and unique survey of the Indian situation in last month's *Race Today* points to the Tamil Nadu government as a sort of insulation for workers' organisation and power against the ruthlessness of Indira Gandhi's central powers. Yesterday Indira removed the buffer by decree. The Tamil Nadu government was suspended from the first of February by a Presidential declaration. The Central Government, more actively after the strikes you report, placed the non-Congress government of this large southern state (whose capital is Madras) on a sort of suspended sentence. Indira's government in Delhi accused the state government of "encouraging corruption, separatism and misusing the emergency powers."

The suspension of Tamil Nadu by Presidential decree proves finally that the constitution of India and the Presidential office have been suspended by the Indira Congress, and are used for party purposes. In addition to suspending the government, reports from India state that several DMK activists have been imprisoned and that battalions of central Reserve Police have been spread all over the state.

Tamil Nadu, one of the non-Hindi speaking states of the south, fought a long battle with Nehru's government over the imposition of the Hindi language on the state by the centre. Through this linguistic and cultural revolt, the



Akua Rugg

Dravida Munetra Kazhagam (DMK) party came to power nine years ago. The DMK is a cultural nationalist party and had within it a strong separatist element. Undoubtedly the DMK has always been on the same side of the political spectrum as Indira Gandhi. They have been a landlord and capitalist party exploiting the issue of Tamil chauvinism to hold on to power. Nevertheless, in today's India, where right wing and left wing parties in opposition to Indira have been thrown into co-operation, the DMK government ignored the censorship rules of the centre and allowed press reports critical of the Congress to appear. As your article stated, they also tolerated without mass police retaliation a demonstration by the state's workers, against the bonus regulation that applies throughout India.

Obviously Indira saw the ferment in Tamil Nadu as the beginning of her end. The workers of Tamil Nadu were fighting on a basic class issue and the DMK had conveniently stepped out of the way. Indira is aware that a strong centre cannot be maintained on the Indian sub-continent without perfectly coordinated and agreeing state apparatuses in all the states.

In the past, the Presidential decree has been used by Indira, and by her father before her, to suspend the communist government of Kerala and of West Bengal. The states are kept under central government control through a governor with the powers of a Viceroy, till a Congress government can be installed through a genuine or rigged election. The fallen DMK government has been dis-

missed because of its unwillingness to stamp out dissent. It is yet to be seen if Indira will leave Mr. Muthuvel Karunanidhi, the dismissed Chief Minister, or his party machine out of prison in order to fight a possible election. Whether they are around or not, one thing is certain, that the cultural nationalist appeal of the DMK, wearing thin after nine years, will not be the issue. The dismissal of the buffer is a declaration of open war between the state centre and the urban working class.

D. Mokashi



# REVIEWS

**A Voice At the Work-Place. Reflections on Colonialism and the Jamaican Worker,**  
by Michael Manley,  
Published by Andre Deutsch, London 1975.  
Price. £3.50.

In this his second book in two years, the Jamaican Prime Minister writes of his former occupation over a period of nearly twenty years, as a full time trade union leader. He tells how it came about that he was first propelled into trade union negotiations in 1952 and of the major struggles to increase the wages and improve the working conditions of the workers, in which he was subsequently engaged. He discusses and rationalises the 'blanket' form of the major Jamaican trade unions and their political alignment with the two major political parties. He comments on the consequences of the division of the workers between the competing trade unions, and concludes with his ideas on the involvement of the workers in decision making.

Modern Jamaican trade unionism developed out of the spontaneous upheaval of the workers in 1938, earlier organisational efforts having all failed to achieve permanence. Its peculiar form and character are largely a legacy of the influence of W.A. Bustamante, a middle class usurer and political adventurer who, by historical accident, became the central figure in the 1938 events. Mr Bustamante had not intended to be a trade union leader. A short flirtation some two years earlier with persons attempting to organise agricultural workers had led him to reject trade unionism as a means of achieving publicity and popularity. In 1937 and again in 1938 he offered his services as 'a mediator between capital and labour', not as a representative of the working class. But the course of events, the stubbornness of the employers and the desperate determination of the workers, left him with no alternative but to organise a trade union. Forced to take that decision, he proceeded to stamp the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union which he formed, with his own peculiar non-working class characteristics.

The major Jamaican trade unions may be distinguished from the organisations created by the workers in most other countries, by their proprietary character. They belong not to their members but to their leaders, being run as a sort of business. In return for the payment of dues, leadership is provided in industrial disputes. But staff appointments and decision making are in the hands of the proprietors. The members are not entirely without influence, but they exercise it in an indirect way, rather similar to the way in which customers influence the choice of goods offered for sale by a shop-keeper.

From this basic feature of Jamaican trade unionism two sub-features follow — the blanket form of the unions which organise all categories of workers

in one union instead of achieving unity and co-ordination through a federation of separate unions; and the complete absence of a democratic branch structure. Jamaican trade unions, with few exceptions, provide no machinery whereby their members can exercise control. There are no monthly, fortnightly or weekly sit-down branch meetings at which the members may make decisions by debating and voting on resolutions, mandate their delegates to represent their point of view at the union's annual conferences, and confirm the minutes of previous decisions.

In the 1940's a determined effort was made to organise a trade union movement consisting of separate member-controlled trade unions. These unions were affiliated to the Jamaican T.U.C. In 1948 the T.U.C. unions were merged into a single union and an attempt was made to preserve the membership control of the organisation through a branch structure. In the event the experiment was not a success, but the T.U.C. union at least possessed the virtue of being an independent working class organisation. The T.U.C. had a written agreement with the Peoples National Party for mutual support, but was not, as the author alleges, 'affiliated' to the P.N.P.

When in 1952, the P.N.P. purged from its ranks the left wing of the party leadership, it also terminated its agreement with the T.U.C. At that time a majority of the T.U.C. leaders were (or thought they were) Marxists. The National Workers Union was then organised and financed by the P.N.P. leaders, persons outside the working class, to destroy and replace the T.U.C. The N.W.U. is affiliated to the P.N.P. and performs the same function in relation to the latter that the B.I.T.U. performs for the Jamaica Labour Party. Each secures working class votes for the political party which it is designed to serve.

Admitting this linkage of the major trade unions to the political parties, the author proceeds to cloud the issue with an elaborate rationalisation. With misleading over-simplification, he alleges that the relationship between the old T.U.C. and the P.N.P. and also that between the trade unions and the political parties in Guyana, were and are relationships identical with the present situation in Jamaica. He then suggests that these relationships represent a peculiarly Caribbean phenomenon explicable in terms of the different effects of the impact of imperialism upon the workers in the Caribbean on the one hand and the people of India and Africa on the other. The comparisons are unnecessary. The truth would be better served by a simple admission that, wherever and whenever possible, bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians will seek to mobilise working class support and postpone the emergence of the workers as an independent political force.

As far as it goes, the author's comment on the





consequence to the workers of their organisational disunity is perceptive:

'Casual observers. . . conclude that the close relationship between unions and political parties has led to a series of governments committed to the cause of the workers and tending to govern with the workers' interests predominantly in mind. The irony is that the exact reverse is true. The very fact that both political parties are allied to unions and that the unions have tended to maintain a chronic and ideologically irrelevant state of combat

amongst themselves has tended to blunt any political impact which the unions might have had on the system.' (p. 209)

But the author does not carry this point to its logical conclusion. Not surprisingly, he fails to make the point that working class unity, desirable as it may be, will be of limited benefit to the workers so long as they remain politically under the leadership of bourgeois or petty bourgeois politicians.

Richard Hart.

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# REVIEW NOTES

**A Time of Fury** — Produced by the Jamaican Information Service.

**Marcus Garvey** — Produced by ABC Television, United States.

*A Time of Fury* and *Marcus Garvey* are two films presently being shown in and around the black community. Both films document the lives of two of Jamaica's national heroes, Paul Bogle and Marcus Garvey. Both of these films were made some time ago, but were never publicly screened in the West Indian community in Britain. What has prompted this interest just now is the resurgence of Garveyism among a section of West Indian youth in Britain.

The Paul Bogle film, *A Time of Fury*, was produced by the Jamaican Information Service. It dealt with the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865, and the roles Paul Bogle and George W Gordon played in it. The story of the rebellion is narrated in a commentary which appears to be based in colonial office documents. The Morant Bay Rebellion was a peasants' movement directed against the colonial establishment of the day. The producers of the film deli-

berately wrested this important movement from history in order to advance cheap propaganda for the policies of the present rulers in Jamaica.

*Marcus Garvey* is an American TV documentary about the Garvey movement in the USA. The film deals with how that movement developed and its later decline.

The interview with Garvey's first wife, Amy Ashwood Garvey, is one of the more important points in the film. She answers questions about his personality and political motivation.

It emerged that Garveyism of the 20's was an important mobilising factor in the struggles waged by black people in the Caribbean and the USA. Garveyism of that time, laid the foundation which gave rise to black power politics of the mid-sixties and early seventies.

These films together serve as a fair introduction to one aspect of Jamaican history and the historical/political movement of black people internationally.

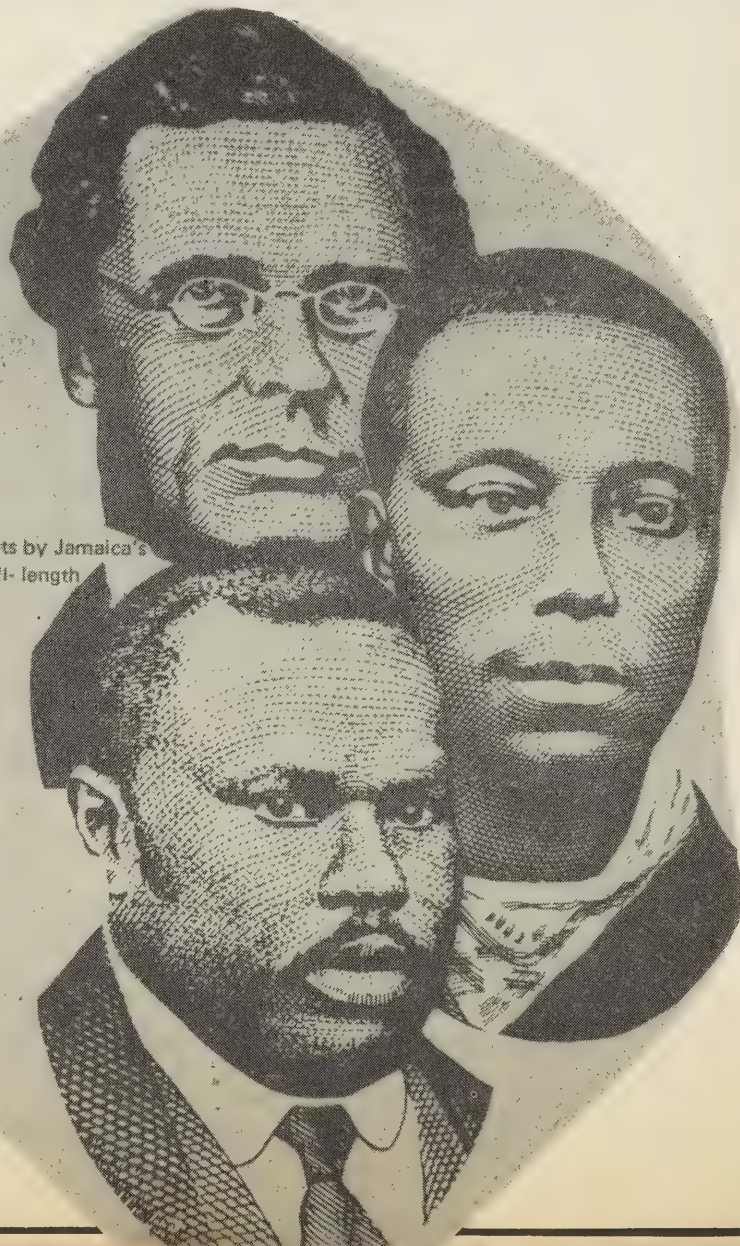
Race Today Collective.

## A TIME OF FURY

the story of the events surrounding the Morant Bay Rebellion.

*A Time of Fury* documents the struggle for justice and human rights by Jamaica's first national heroes: Paul Bogle and George William Gordon — a full-length feature film not to be missed.

## MARCUS GARVEY





**Land of The Political Prisoners**  
Published by Campaign for the Release of Indian  
Political Prisoners.  
22 Boundary Road, London N.W.8.  
Price 40p + 10p postage.

*Land of the political prisoners* gives a detailed account of the lives of political prisoners held in jails all over India. It is a collection of first-hand reports and articles published in India by newspapers and magazines before the censorship laws were passed.

The articles, which describe day to day life in these over-crowded, filthy, disease-infested prisons, present a picture of utter misery and despair. The repression of prisoners by the authorities is savage and brutal, and the living conditions within the jails, barbaric.

Unlike many past publications on Indian political prisoners, this booklet is not merely a description of torture and degradation. It includes a report by the Association for Defence of Democratic Rights (ADDR), which is a growing national organisation actively campaigning for the release of political prisoners in India, and another by Mary Tyler, the English school teacher held for five years without trial in an Indian prison. She outlines, in part, the composition of the prison population: '... In 1974 there were about 500 railwaymen in Hazaribagh jail during and after the strike. On two occasions there were 3,000 school teachers arrested for going on strike. Once there were several hundred local government and hospital employees arrested whilst on strike. ...'

Since the declaration of a State of Emergency in India last June, international attention has been focused on the number of political prisoners held in Indian jails. As C.R.I.P.P. point out in their introduction, this is due largely to the spate of arrests of both right-wing and left-wing opposition leaders.

'What is often ignored is that long before this emergency, the Indian Government had detained without trial at least 50,000 - 60,000 political prisoners' - mostly young men and women, some students, suspected of being 'Naxalites'. Added to this count are the mass arrests of strikers and political activists who have taken a new organisational energy into the prisons.

The publication of this booklet by C.R.I.P.P. is part of a broad based campaign in Britain - made public on 25th January 1976 when 2,000 people gathered at Hyde Park in London and marched to a rally at Trafalgar square in support of the Campaign's three demands:

1. The discontinuance of all forms of torture in prison and other places of detention
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3. Release all political prisoners.

Race Today Collective.

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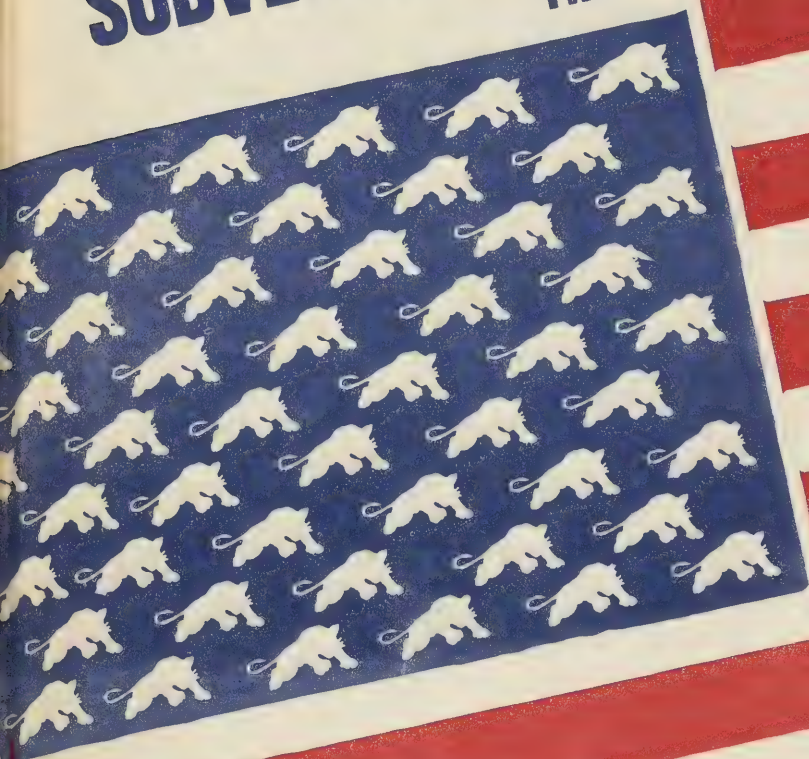
# Race Today

MARCH 1976

25p

"WE DID NOT COME ALIVE IN BRITAIN"  
BENGALI HOUSING ACTION GROUP IS FORMED

## HOW THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SUBVERTED THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY THE FBI REVELATIONS





# LETTERS

## PAN-AFRICANISM

*Dear Race Today,*

With each passing day, the world wide struggle against exploitation, oppression and racial discrimination takes on wider dimensions. This makes it the more necessary for all concerned to exchange information on the nature of the struggle in their respective localities.

In a country like Ghana — re-admitted into the neo-colonialist fold on 24th February 1966. The struggle has substantially been blurred by the forming of tribal sentiments among the people. This cunning device of the bourgeoisie has made our task here extremely difficult, in that we have to spend a lot of time dissuading the masses from holding dearly to the negative efforts of tribalism.

In the course of this anti-tribalism campaign we also endeavour to enlighten them on the nature of the class struggle. Brothers and sisters will however bear with us in our difficult moments particularly in an atmosphere like ours where revolutionary literature is next to impossible to find. In these trying moments, we take this opportunity to appeal to you to send us the relevant revolutionary literature. This, will be very instrumental in our analysis of the world revolution in general and the Pan-African revolution in particular. Link us to as many Pan-African and world revolutionary movements as possible.

Hoping to hear from you sooner than later. We end here with the most revolutionary greetings.

Pan-Afrikan  
Affairs Research Centre,  
Ghana.

## BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

*Dear Race Today,*

It was with interest, but no surprise, that I noticed that 12 senior members of Scotland Yard have been arrested on several charges of bribery and corruption.

According to the media these officers all held high ranking positions within the force and by the commendations mentioned, the medals and the impressive descriptions of their service, they were 'exemplary' members of the force.

Conspiracy and corruption in the police force is not something that the black community, particularly the youth is unfamiliar with. The way police officers stand before a court and colloborate amongst themselves blatant lies and total falsifications of incidents that happened in the Carib club, and the Mangrove, etc. is something that has been noted and registered by most of us.

Let us hope that these exposures do not turn into an advantage for the police, and that commissioner Mark won't be able to persuade the public that corruption within the police force has ended.

Marcia Thompson  
Peckham  
London S.E.15.

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# EDITORIAL

## SELF ORGANISATION

VS

## 'SELF HELP'

The crisis of black organisations in Britain is a crisis of ideology. This is the contention of John La Rose in one of our feature articles this month, *'We Did Not Come Alive In Britain'*. In tracing and clarifying the social and political activity of West Indians in Britain, from their anti-colonial struggles in the Caribbean to their presence in the political arena here, he points to the strengths and weaknesses of their organisations. He, at all times distinguishes the revolutionary potential of the black movement from its organisational forms and leaders.

Over the last two years, *Race Today* has sought to clarify and bring a new political perspective to the self-organised activity of a black community, which 'did not come alive in Britain'. Central to our perspective is the belief that the black working class, with its total view of society from below, is capable of and in the process of building new and revolutionary organisations.

The factors of black struggle speak for themselves. On the industrial front, black workers in the waged section of the working class have proved time and time again their determination and ability to break out of the stultifying formations of union and social contracts, to make a struggle against employers and state for better wages, better material conditions, a shortening of the working day, and a de-intensification of the working hour. Within the community, the black wageless, particularly those born or brought up here, have posed — by their constant war with the police, their rebellion in the schools, and their resistance to doing menial dirty jobs — a formidable challenge to the status quo. These are struggles directed towards their own material emancipations, an emancipation which confronts the question of power at every stage.

Our view of the self-activity of the black working class, both Caribbean and Asian, has caused us to break from the idea of 'organising' them. We are not for setting up, in the fashion of the 60's, a vanguard party or vehicle with a welfare programme to attract people. John La Rose points to some of the organisations of the 60's, who lost their way attempting to do just that.

Today, the black community in Britain is left with the bits and pieces of these attempts, which have, in the cruel process of class struggle, turned into the opposite of what they aspired to be. In the name of 'service to the community', there has been a growth of state-nurtured cadres of black workers, who are devoted to dealing with the particularities of black rebellion.

*Race Today* has never been, nor intends to be, a crutch for serving a community, whom we do not see as crippled. We are not in business to patch-up the derelict property of the various councils, or to gather and redistribute meagre welfare benefits to the jobless, the wageless or the homeless. The responsibility for the functioning of the Welfare State must remain with the Welfare State, but it is time that its sub-contractors and agents in the black community were seen as such.

There are those in the black community who do not share our view. Indeed, there are those who are in active opposition to it. They use the rallying call of blackness as a smoke-screen to carry on the work of bringing back to capitalist disciplines and employment the large and rebellious sections of prodigal sons and daughters, who have strayed to acting on possibilities that their parents did not have. In the name of 'revolution' and 'self-help', these organisations get hold of black youths, and, however inefficiently, train and discipline them, where schools have failed to do so. The apprenticeships and technology that they offer the youth — offering themselves well-paid jobs at the same time — are for the same semi-skilled tasks which British workers have rejected outright.

A recent article in the *London Evening Standard* shows how the re-skilling process is seen by the re-skillers themselves — as the means for creating a black middle class to manage the rest of black society:

"We try to teach them what they didn't learn at school. They are more willing to work here because of the sense of being with your own people". (Black re-skinner)

"When I first came here, many of these youngsters had given up. The situation was potentially dynamite. People who feel that there is no purpose in trying won't fit into any kind of society. They are the sort from which revolutions spring. . . So I introduced these courses for the less able. I wanted to create a middle class among the West Indians to pacify the district. . . ." (White re-skinner).

This is what the notion of black power, so potent in the 60's, has been translated into. The hostels that these 'activists' set up in the community, the sub-contracting of nurseries, educational facilities, and other service-stations they maintain, are no more than refuelling points for the organisational vessels, which steer into the harbour of dirty jobs. As we have constantly pointed out, there is a mutiny aboard, and the hour is at hand when we would scuttle these ships.

Race Today Collective March 1976.



# HOUSING STRUGGLE: THE TIGER IS ON THE LOOSE

Out of the struggles of Bengali families for decent housing in the East End of London, which *Race Today* has reported and assisted in the last eighteen months, an organisation has been born. On Friday 6th February, at the Montefiore Centre in Deal Street E.1., seventy heads of Bengali families gathered to form the Bengali Housing Action Group (BHAG — the acronym in Bengali means 'Tiger' and in Urdu and Hindi it means 'share'). The meeting defined the perspective of the group — to fight for a special and permanent policy on housing for black people. It approved a simple constitution and elected an executive committee of ten representatives.

A member of the *Tower Hamlets Squatting Association* and two members of the *Race Today Collective*, who have been working for the last year on the Bengali Housing situation in the East End, were co-opted onto the executive committee.

The formation of BHAG is a formidable step in the East End housing struggle. It is a direct challenge to the housing authorities and elected representatives of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, and the Greater London Council. And it is a challenge not only to the methods and perspectives of the Community Relations Commission in the area, but to its very reason for existence.

The Bengali Housing Action Group is at once an organisation and a campaign. The campaigns that individual families and whole streets of squatters have carried out — around the elimination of squat-selling by officials and others, around the harassment of squatters by the Gas and Electricity Boards,

around the promises and prospects of rehousing — have defined the perspectives of the autonomous organisation. These perspectives will define the further campaign.

Letters from BHAG have been sent out to the GLC, to Tower Hamlets Council, to the Gas and Electricity Boards demanding that they meet and discuss several demands with the executive and membership of the organisation.

The majority of the members of BHAG, which is open to all black people in the area, are Bangla Deshi workers and their families. Their position as immigrant workers has meant discrimination as far as housing is concerned. A large number of the members, with families about to join them from Bangla Desh, are classified by the housing authority as 'single' men. As such, they have no priority on the housing lists of the local council or the GLC and, by virtue of having to hold down jobs in the East End, have exercised their option to squat. Other members, with families in London, have had their names on the housing lists since the sixties and have also temporarily moved into derelict squatting accommodation.

From the Electricity and Gas Boards — BHAG is demanding a constant and legal supply of amenities, no more and no less than is given to any person willing to pay deposits and bills. Their letter to the Gas and Electricity Boards points out that the Minister for Energy, Anthony Wedgwood Benn,





## LINKING THE STRUGGLES

recently answered a question in the House of Commons saying that squatters must not be discriminated against in the supply of current and fuel to their homes.

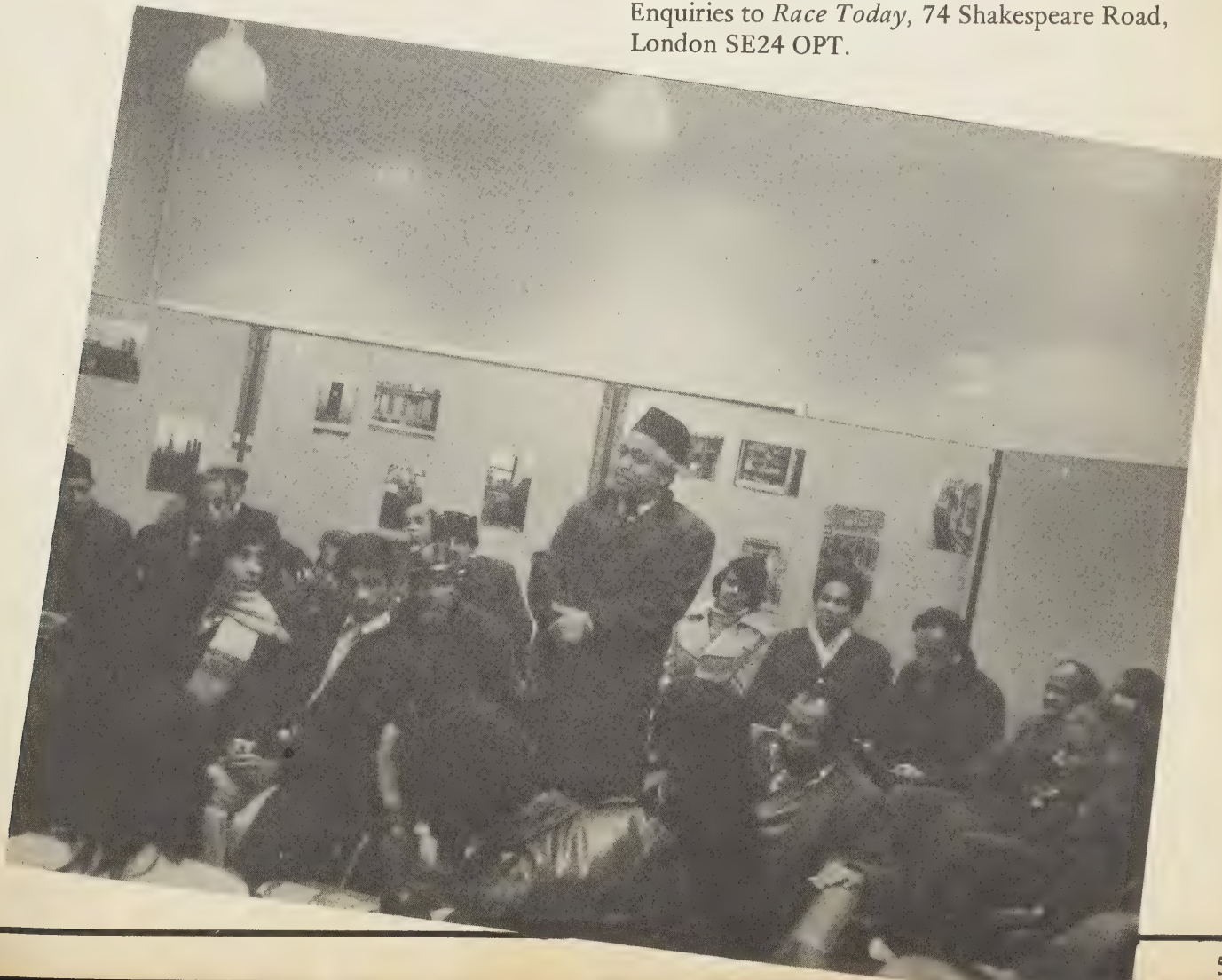
From the GLC and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, *BHAG* is demanding a housing policy for black people, which would entail rehousing in decent as opposed to 'low demand' accommodation, and in an area of which the family in question approves. At its first general meeting, *BHAG* committed itself as an organisation to an agitational approach for the realisation of these demands.

In itself, *BHAG* is a rejection of the solution to housing problems that the state has posed in other communities, providing, through the CRC and other race agencies, a restricted and restricting amount of hostel accommodation — a solution which reduces the black worker, as in Germany and other parts of Europe, to a wage labourer with no rights in the society and no claims on decent housing. The black workers of Britain have consistently refused to accommodate to this battery-chicken model of a labour force. For years the British State has bought immigrant labour on the cheap, dodging the necessity to house, to skill and to reproduce the black labour force from conception to retirement. The presence of organisations such as the Bengali Housing Action Group, begins to put an end to this evasion.

Several of the members of *BHAG* have been, in the years past, members of squatting organisations such as the East London Squatters and the Stepney Squatters groups. These groups, while representing their day to day difficulties and placing them before the authorities, failed to generate a perspective and policy for black workers' housing needs and, inevitably, failed to grasp the strength that the Bengali workers as a community have in that area.

Though statistics of population are not up to date, it is clear that the Bengali Community of the East End can elect and dismiss councillors on the Tower Hamlets Council through organisation around the polls. The existence of *BHAG* means that the Labour Party and others, to win votes, will have to address a militant population of black workers directly, rather than using the discredited buffers of Race Relations legislation or the discredited buffs of the CRC.

Having been called upon to inspire and assist *BHAG*, *Race Today* pledged, at the first General Meeting, our continuing willingness to use the magazine as a forum and voice of the group and to place our organisational machinery at their disposal. For us, *BHAG* is one of the clearest manifestations of the collective power of black workers fighting the state in their own material interest, seeking to use their community's cohesiveness and their particular position in the working class of Britain as a bargaining strength. The *BHAG* is on the loose. Enquiries to *Race Today*, 74 Shakespeare Road, London SE24 OPT.





## ILLEGAL RAIDS

In the first week of December, 1975, and the third week of February, 1976, a series of raids were mounted in East and South East London by police and immigration officers on four garment factories. The sweat shops assembling clothes for the rag trade, that litter the East End of London, have become the latest hunting ground for illegal immigrants.

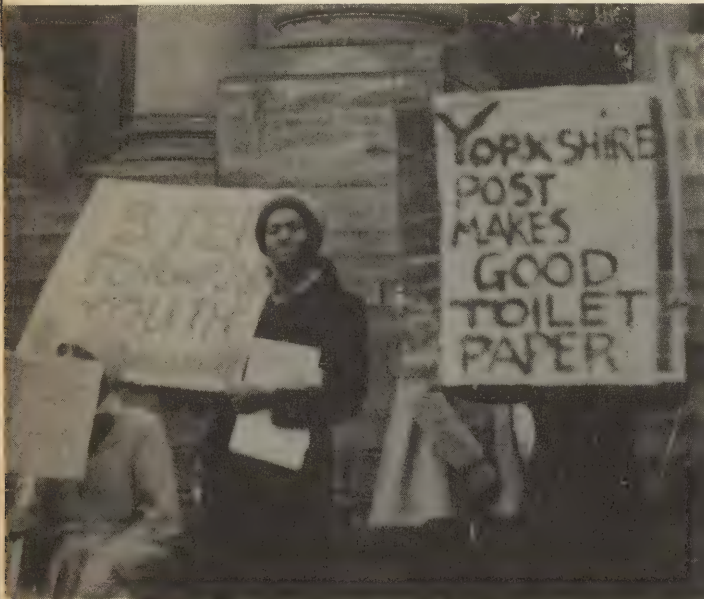
Over the last decade the ownership of these factories has moved from the Jewish community, into the hands of newer immigrants, in particular Turkish and Greek Cypriots. They employ their own communities, as well as the other, weaker sections of the immigrant community, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and West African women. White workers left these factories long ago for better pay and conditions.

The latest raids took place on Friday, 20th February, at Red Ten Fashions and Desilu Fashions. And like the two in December, were led by Sgt. Kemal Mizri from Peckham police station and PC David Holmes from East Dulwich police station. The immigrants themselves take up the story.

"About 11 policemen and six immigration officers came. They surrounded the place, went upstairs to the factory and downstairs into the showroom and began questioning anyone who was 'foreign looking'. They did not ask for anyone or say specifically who they wanted". Mr Redif owner of Red Ten Fashions.

Serafat Ali, takes up the story. . . "Four or five men approached me, one asked me where I came from, I said Bangladesh, he said no, you are from Pakistan, you are here illegally. Then they took me to the police station and told me they would send me back to Pakistan tomorrow. After a few hours they took me home, I showed them my passport, and they let me go."

Iftakhar Ahmed said, "I was asked my name and nationality by a plain clothes officer. I told them I had a British passport and was taken to the Leman Street police station and detained." He was told by PC Kemal Mizri that if he didn't tell the truth he would have his teeth knocked out. Later when it was confirmed that he was telling the truth he was let go. In all six people were detained. At the end



Leeds Observer Paper

## BONFIRE YOUTH COMMITTED FOR TRIAL

On February 12th, 1976 a Magistrate's Court in Leeds upheld charges against 12 black youth, ranging from threatening behaviour to actual bodily harm, and committed them to stand trial at Leeds Crown Court.

These 12 youths were arrested by the police on Bonfire Night (November 5th, 1975), when some 400 youths, mostly black, engaged the Merseyside police force in a massive confrontation on the streets of Chapeltown.

The confrontation was provoked by the police, who sent an unmarked patrol car into the area to spy on the festivities. The youths, immediately wise to the car and its occupants, responded with physical outrage to the police infiltrating their territory. This was the signal for the police to send in their forces. The police claimed later that the driver of the patrol car had got himself lost and had inadvertently strayed into the area. However, in preparation for the celebration of Bonfire Night, police from all over Merseyside were mobilised on stand by. (See *Race Today*, December '75 and January '76).

Over 150 people from the Chapeltown community crowded into court for the committal proceedings, to show their support for the brothers on trial. Outside a picket organised by the Defence Committee was held while the proceedings continued.

Information, messages of support and solidarity can be sent to the Defence Committee, c/o, The Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds.

## Wanted

EXPERIENCED VOLUNTEERS (LAWYERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, OTHERS) TO GIVE ADVICE ON IMMIGRATION, HOUSING, FINANCE, ETC. FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS INFORMATION SESSION. EVENINGS IN FOREST GATE E.7.

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of the day Bayram Ennvar, a Turkish Cypriot worker at Red Ten Fashions was detained in Pentonville Prison on a charge of being a ships deserter. Those who witnessed the police and immigration officers actions claim that the police were not looking for any particular person, that it was a general raid.

In a recent interview, Alex Lyon Minister of State at the Home Office, had this to say when questioned about Home Office policy on factory raids:

*"That is totally opposed to government policy. I certainly will investigate any case of which you can give me the details. Ever since a similar thing took place in Camden in 1973, we have given instructions that there is to be no harassment of immigrants in anything like that way. But what is alleged is not always the truth. We do not use the police or immigration service for a general swoop what we do do is investigate where the police have a specific complaint on an alleged breach of the law."*

Here, Mr Lyon, are two raids for you to investigate.

## BLACK PARLIAMENT FIASCO

The plan to float a national black parliament has run into deep water. The decision to form such an organisation came out of a conference in January last year entitled "Black People In Britain: The Way Forward" (See *Race Today* March 1975).

The conference brought together members of the black middle class: the race professionals, community relations officers and leaders of one man band organisations in a bid to increase their power. It tried to formalise their position within the state structure. Their aim, clearly outlined by Lord David Pitt, was to make the white power structure black — more black policemen, more blacks in parliament, more black magistrates, more black trade union officials, more blacks in borough councils — in effect to create a black administrative middle class, which could guarantee to control the rest of the population.

Also present at this conference were representatives from the Home Office, the Department of Employment, the Department of Education and Science and members of seven charitable trusts. They too have a stake in creating an authority in the black community, whose credentials for moderate approaches to race questions, have already been tried and tested. The conference itself was

funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation as have all its other activities since.

It was left to the Post Conference Constituent Committee to draft a constitution for this national black organisation which intends to be a massive bureaucracy of 11 sub-committees and 60 posts. The meeting of the South East Area Committee, convened on 26th January at the Keskidee Centre in North London was to approve the draft constitution. Similar meetings were supposed to take place in other parts of the country. These were to bring together delegates from organisations of 25 or more people. In reality, those who turned up at the Keskidee were representatives of many varied and scattered social clubs and welfare groups — from the Untouchables of India to the West Indian Artists' Centre. These were to be the basis of the black Parliament. Most of them were unaware of what they had been called together for and were at no time asked to say who they represented. The stage was set for a comic farce, as those present attempted to find out what was required of them. From the platform, Charles Mungo of the Trinidad and Tobago Association (UK), read the preamble to the draft constitution.

This was as far as the meeting got. Present in the audience was a small faction of blacks, who, as recipients of urban aid themselves, sought vocally to discredit the platform on the question of Gulbenkian's money. They began by issuing a challenge to the concept of black people as an 'under-privileged minority'. They kept up constant heckling, and thwarted every attempt that the platform made to get the draft constitution read and discussed. They urged the platform to step down, to tear up the draft constitution and abandon the attempt to "bulldoze black people".

The draft constitution proposed that one of the functions of the black parliament should be to handle and channel all funds which enter the black community from charitable foundations. No wonder then that money became the major bone of contention between this opposition and the platform. Mr Vishnu Sharma, one of the members of the Post Conference Constituent Committee, explained from the platform that Gulbenkian had undertaken to fund the black parliament for the first six months of its existence. When asked from the floor as to how much money Gulbenkian had put up, he refused to answer. Confusion reigned for an hour or more, during which time it degenerated into a slanging match between delegate and delegate, and delegate and platform, who made several desperate attempts to get the conference off the ground. The conference lasted for two hours, but failed even to have the draft constitution read let alone approved. It ended with the platform hastily promising that another meeting would be called in the near future. And we can be sure that the fiasco at the Keskidee won't be the last attempt of this section to launch their 'black parliament'.



## ANGUILLAN DEFEAT

While the news of fierce anti-colonial struggles occupied the headlines, the British government quietly acquired for herself a new colony in the Caribbean.

On February 11th 1976, Anguilla, with a population of 7000, was given a new constitution by the British government. The constitution provides for a commissioner, appointed of course by Britain, to consult with the island's executive council in the formulation of policies for the island.

There will be a legislative council of seven elected members, two members nominated by the Commissioner in consultation with the island's Chief Minister, and three official members — the Chief Secretary, Financial Secretary and Attorney General.

Save for the change of title from Governor to Commissioner, the constitution is exactly the same as those thrown around the colonial countries decades ago.

It was in 1969 when the Anguillans rebelled against the rule of St. Kitts. Anguilla, Nevis and St. Kitts had been brought together under one state by the British colonial authorities. Government was centralised in St. Kitts. In response to the rebellion, the British landed a force of army and police on the island.

No way would the Anguillans rejoin the union with St. Kitts and Nevis and the British government could not force them to. Instead, Anguillans were allowed to remain for seven years in a state of constitutional limbo until three weeks ago, when Britain imposed direct colonial rule. The original rebellion for independence finally petered out.

Below is a diary of the struggles of Anguillian people for independence.

*June 18th 1825* (dispatch from Governor Maxwell to Earl Bathurst). An act had recently been passed reducing the power of the Anguillian local council and transferring certain governmental powers to St. Kitts. The inhabitants protested: "can we indulge a hope that laws enacted particularly for this community can or will be made with much regard to its interest when they are passed by a body of men in a distant and remote island. . . ."

*August 23rd 1873* — More than 100 Anguillans petitioned the colonial office in favour of crown colony government and against being ruled by St. Kitts.

*August 1958* — Anguillans got together and asked the representative on the Legislative Council of St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla, a Mr Kenneth Hazel, to make a move to Britain for the secession of Anguilla from St. Kitts.

*August 1967* — Associated Statehood Constitution calls for setting up of local government in Anguilla. Central government in St. Kitts did not. Instead they imposed an Advisory Board for Anguilla, "which would be advised by the Premier".

*July 1967* — Anguillans vote 1813 to 5 to secede from the state of St. Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla. Seven man police force sent back to St. Kitts.

*July 1967* — Caribbean governments at the Governmental conference on Anguilla, held in Barbados, agreed that a UK naval ship, supported by a military or naval force should aim to re-establish St. Kitts police and civil authorities in Anguilla and put down any armed resistance.

*February 1969* — Anguillans go to the polls and vote 1739 to 4 for independence.

*February 25th 1969* — British representative, Mr Whitlock, arrives in St. Kitts.

*March 3rd 1969* — Reported that Anguillans are preparing to go to the polls on March 11th and 25th to elect the first legislature and on April 3rd to elect their President and Vice-president under the independence constitution.

*March 11th 1969* — Whitlock arrives in Anguilla with "peace formula." He is chased off the island by armed Anguillans.

Then the invasion of the island by British troops and police follows, and the rebellion is given seven years to fizzle out.

*February 11th 1976* — Britain imposes the formal colonial constitution on the Anguillian people.

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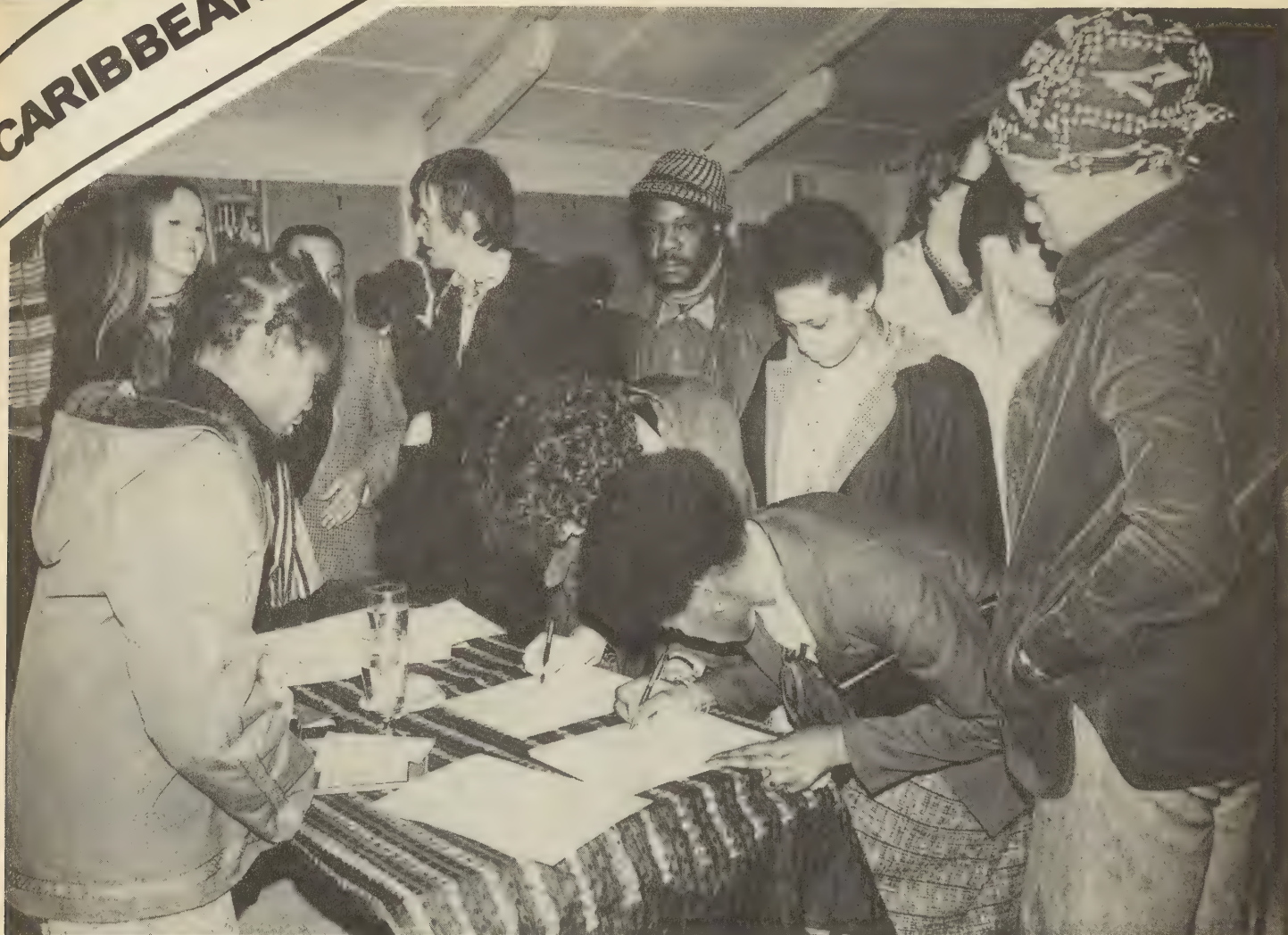
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# TROTTER, SUPPORT GROWS

All those present at the *Race Today* anniversary lecture, 7.2.76, signed two petitions, both of which called on the Premier of Dominica and the Foreign Secretary in the British Government to take action on the Desmond Trotter issue.

Dominica is an Associated State of Britain.

Trotter was sentenced to death on the flimsiest of evidence for the murder of a white American tourist. The manner of Desmond's arrest and subsequent conviction has strengthened the view that he was selected by the Dominican government for the death sentence because of his political views and activities on the island. His appeal will be heard any day now at the Privy Council in London, in an atmosphere of a growing international protest against any attempt to execute him.

To the Premier of Dominica, Patrick John, the *Race Today* petition reads as follows:

We, who are in attendance at the *Race Today* annual lecture, held to commemorate the second year of the publication of the journal, *Race Today*, published from within the black community in Britain, call on you, the Premier of Dominica, to revoke the sentence of death passed against Desmond Trotter.

We are convinced that his intended execution is a backward step in the life of any modern society, more so since the evidence presented at his trial leaves much to be desired.

The Foreign Secretary in the British Government, James Callaghan, was also petitioned to use his influence in having the death sentence revoked.



When the facts of Watergate were dramatically exposed before the world, the major response was one of surprised horror at the depths to which politicians and state officials in America had sunk. Nothing like it has been recorded in modern history.

The section of the population, which had no difficulty in believing the facts and accepting, without hesitation, the level of corruption unfolding day by day, was the black community. They knew that Watergate was not the first time such 'dirty tricks' had been used.

When the black community protested and made allegations that politicians, state bureaucrats and their agencies had embarked on a programme of gangsterism aimed at destroying the black movement in the USA, the allegations were dismissed as incredible. When they claimed that the FBI murdered, framed and instituted provocative activities aimed at eliminating activists within the black movement, this was seen as hysteria. Such reactions gave the politicians and bureaucrats growing con-

fidence to pursue their course. The result was Watergate. Now, from the mouths of ex-FBI agents, and FBI documents, the truth is out. Not only does it prove that the black community was correct, it clearly shows what the modern state is capable of today.

In 1966, America saw the formation of the Black Panther Party, a revolutionary organisation consisting mainly of the urban unemployed and a minority of black students. The party was formed in Oakland California. Then, its membership was relatively small. One of the major issues facing the community was police brutality, particularly against the unemployed ghetto blacks. The Panthers took advantage of an American law which gives its citizens the right to bear arms in public, once the weapons were not concealed. They began patrolling the Oakland community in an effort to reduce police activity. This resulted in several daring confrontations with the police and succeeded in winning them the support of the community.

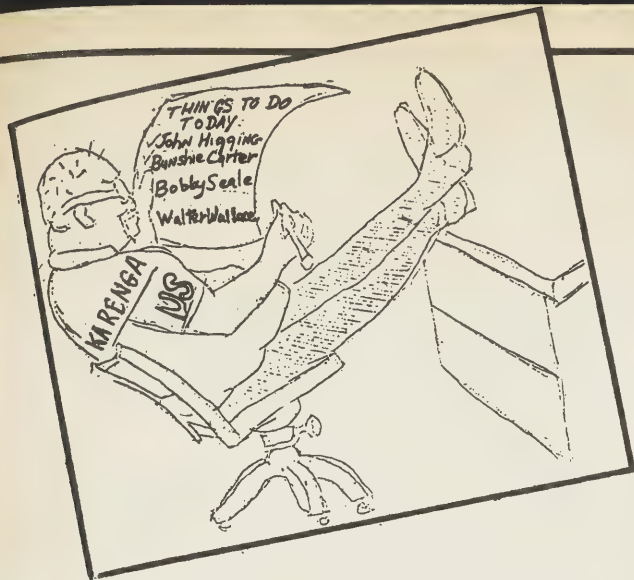
The Black Panther Party, formed in the United States of America in 1966, represents the most determined and organised stage of opposition to that government's failure to satisfy the hopes and aspirations of the black unemployed.

Leila Hassan, Assistant Editor of *Race Today*, documents the reaction of the American State to the challenge presented by the Black Panther Party, and its implications for the unemployed black youth movement in Britain.

# HOW THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SUBVERTED THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY THE FBI REVELATIONS







They formulated a ten point programme demanding:

1. The power to determine the destiny of their community.
2. Full employment.
3. An end to robbery by the capitalists of the black community.
4. Decent housing fit for the shelter of human beings.
5. Education for their people that exposes the true nature of the decadent American society and which teaches them their true history and their role in the present day society.
6. Exemption of all black men from military service.
7. An end to police brutality and murder of black people.
8. Freedom for all black men held in federal state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. Black people be tried by a jury of their peers.
10. Land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

In response to this programme, unemployed blacks throughout the USA flocked to join and support the BPP. By 1968, the BPP had chapters in every single black community throughout the USA. Come 1970, a top secret report to the President of the USA submitted that 25% of the black population had 'a great respect for the BPP, including 43% of blacks under the age of 21'. No other organisation has had the impact upon revolutionary movements nationally and internationally that the Panthers have had; from the Dalit Panthers in India to Black Panther organisations in Israel and Britain.

The extent to which the American state sought to eliminate the Party has only recently been brought to light. Documents from the FBI's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) have been made public and ex FBI agents testified to the American Senate's Intelligence Committee as to the corrupt practices and methods employed by them to carry out instructions aimed at destroying the BPP.

FBI infiltration resulted in the deaths of leading members of the party in Chicago and California. The FBI succeeded in exacerbating conflicts between the BPP and other black organisations. They were able to instigate a black nationalist organisation, to murder BPP members.

Outlined below are details of FBI activity against the BPP in California and Chicago.

## THE MURDER OF JOHN HUGGINS, ALPRENTICE 'BUNCHY' CARTER, JOHN SAVAGE AND SYLVESTER BELL

In the late '60's, the black movement was pre-occupied primarily with what relationships if any they should have with white groups. The BPP publicly stated its willingness to work in a coalition with white groups. Black nationalist groups took the opposite position. They wanted no links with whites. In California the conflict was particularly sharp, between the Panthers and the black nationalist group led by Ron Karenga, the US Organisation.

Political differences were manifested in personal abuse and slander. When members of the opposing groups met they would insult, threaten and 'murder mouth' each other. In May 1968, the BPP issued a directive that its members should refrain from petty squabbles with other black organisations and not 'murder mouth' individuals. It named the US Organisation and Ron Karenga in particular.

The COINTELPRO documents reveal that the conflict was closely followed by the FBI. Under J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI manipulated the situation to its own advantage. The Counterintelligence Program document of 2nd December, 1968, sent from the offices of J. Edgar Hoover to 13 cities in the United States, tells all. It reads:

For the information of recipient offices a serious struggle is taking place between the Black Panther Party (BPP) and the US Organisation. The struggle has reached such proportions that it is taking on the aura of gang warfare with attendant threats of murder and reprisals.

In order to fully capitalise upon BPP and US differences, as well as to exploit all avenues of creating further dissension in the ranks of the BPP, recipient offices are instructed to submit imaginative and hard hitting counterintelligence measures aimed at crippling the BPP. Commencing December 2, 1968, and every two week period thereafter, each office is instructed to submit a letter under this caption containing counterintelligence measures aimed against the BPP. The bi-weekly letter should also contain accomplishments obtained during the previous two week period under caption program. All counterintelligence actions must be approved at the Bureau prior to taking steps to implement them.

Six weeks after this document was issued, two leading members of the BPP, Alprentice 'Bunchy' Carter and John Huggins were gunned to death by members of the US Organisation on the Los Angeles campus of the University of California. Two members of the US Organisation, George and Larry Stiner, were subsequently convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. However, on March 31st, 1974, both 'escaped' from San Quentin prison by walking away from a family visitors' area during a weekend family visit, and have not been seen since.

Following these murders, leaflets arrived at the BPP offices in Los Angeles. These showed a drawing of Ron Karenga looking through a list of 'things to do today'. The list contained the names of John



Huggins, Bunchy Carter, Bobby Seale and Walter Wallace. Ticks were placed next to Huggins' and Carter's names implying Huggins and Carter were taken care of and the next to go were Seale and Wallace. More leaflets arrived, all drawings, and all threatening death to Bobby Seale, Huey Newton (the founder members of the BPP) and David Hilliard Chief of Staff of the Party. Investigations have since uncovered that all these leaflets originated from the Counterintelligence Program (COIN-TELPRO) of the FBI. These leaflets and other promptings succeeded in inciting further violence against the BPP.

On May 19th, 1969, at a rally held in San Diego, California, to commemorate Malcolm X's birthday, US Organisation members pulled guns on a crowd and harassed and threatened BPP members.

On May 23rd, 1969, Party members John Savage and Jeffrey Jennings, were walking towards their office when a member of the US Organisation called 'Tambozi', grabbed John Savage by the shoulder, jammed a .38 automatic pistol into the back of his neck and shot him dead.

On August 15th, 1969, BPP member Sylvester Bell was murdered by Ron Karenga's men, in an attempt to intimidate him from giving evidence at the trial of the Stiner brothers, charged with the killings of Bunchy Carter and John Huggins. The murderers of John Savage and Sylvester Bell have never been brought to trial.

Another COINTELPRO document dated 18th September, 1969 states:

In view of the recent killing of BPP member Sylvester Bell, a new cartoon is being considered in hope that it will assist in the continuance of the rift between the BPP and US. This cartoon, or series of cartoons, will be similar in nature to those formerly approved by the Bureau and will be forwarded to the Bureau for evaluation and approval immediately upon their completion.

### THE MURDER OF FRED HAMPTON AND MARK CLARK

Fred Hampton, aged 21, was the Chairman of the Chicago Chapter of the Black Panther Party. He was widely respected as one of the organisation's leading cadres in the community. Seen as a threat by the FBI, the Chicago BPP became a target for their 'imaginative, hard-hitting, counterintelligence measures.

In January 1969, the FBI made an unsuccessful attempt to create friction between the powerful and violent black Chicago gang, the Blackstone Rangers, composed entirely of unemployed youths and the BPP. Their memo of 16th December reveals that the FBI composed and handwrote (with the appropriate mis-spellings) the following letter sent to Jeff Fort the leader of the Blackstone Rangers. They aimed to "intensify the degree of animosity between the two groups and occasion Fort to take retaliatory action which could disrupt the BPP or lead to reprisals against its leadership." It was hoped that it would prevent the possibility of a working alliance between the BPP and the Rangers.

The letter read:

"Brother Jeff:

I've spent some time with Panther friends on the west side lately and I know what's been going on. The brothers that run the Panthers blame you for blocking their thing and there's suppose to be a hit out for you. I'm not a Panther or a Ranger, just black. From what I see these Panthers are out for themselves not black people. I think you ought to know what their (sic) up to. I know what I'd do if I was you.

You might hear from me again.

A black brother you don't know."

The memo further states that, "consideration has been given to a similar letter to the BPP alleging a Ranger plot against the BPP leadership." However, "it was not felt that this would be productive, principally because the BPP at present is not believed as violence-prone as the Rangers to whom violent type activity — shooting and the like — is second nature."

This enterprise failed to trigger off the much hoped for war. The FBI then moved to implement the alternative.

On December 4th, 1969, in a pre-dawn raid, the Chicago police attacked an apartment where Fred Hampton was staying. They murdered him in his sleep, together with another party member Mark Clark. Seven other members were also in the apartment at the time; some were severely wounded. The police attack was one of the most savage ever launched in Chicago. At the end of it, the apartment was left riddled with bullets. The police justified their actions by claiming that BPP members had fired back. The Party, then and since, maintained that this was not true. The COINTELPRO documents now confirm information first uncovered in 1973, that William O'Neal, Chief of Panther Security, and personal bodyguard to Fred Hampton, was a paid informer for the FBI. He gave them a detailed floor plan of the apartment, which explains why the police gunfire went directly to where Hampton was sleeping. He told them that there were illegal firearms in the apartment, and it is alleged, drugged Hampton the night before the raid. Even after the raid, O'Neal continued to work for the FBI, reporting on the meetings between the Hampton family, witnesses and lawyers. He was paid \$10,000 for his services.

In his autobiography, *Revolutionary Suicide*, Huey P. Newton outlines the choices that faced him as a young man. In his home were mirrored the options available to him in society. His older brother, Sonny Man, was a successful hustler (but for how long?). His parents were workers who, after many years of hard toil, had little to show for it. His brother Melvin was at college, hoping that by intellectual pursuits he would have an alternative to these existences. In seeking to resolve the conflict between these life options, Huey Newton could only come up with a revolutionary solution. George Jackson, Eldridge Cleaver, Malcolm X, Bobby Seale and the thousands of other urban unemployed, were faced



*Bunchy Carter, Fred Hampton, John Savage, Sylvester Bell and John Huggins all murdered at the instigation of the FBI.*

*photos: Black Panther Party*

with a similar reality and generated from it a political awareness and a political solution. The Black Panther Party, as the organisational form that this solution took, was the highest form of organisation that the urban unemployed have reached anywhere in the world. Their programme located the black community of the United States in the totality of American society and posed for it a revolutionary solution.

In Britain, we have seen counter intelligence activity operating against the Irish unemployed and their political organisations. British blacks, particularly the unemployed, have no difficulty in accepting the fact of Special Branch activities frame ups, informers and agent provocateurs. From their position, at the bottom of this society, they know intimately the nature of the British state.

In Britain, no organisational force to compare with the Black Panther Party has yet emerged. A large number of unemployed blacks is only now in the process of emerging here. As capital develops, in our era, the level of unemployment increases, and all developed societies are faced with trying to find a solution to the demands that the unemployed are making.

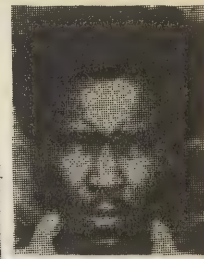
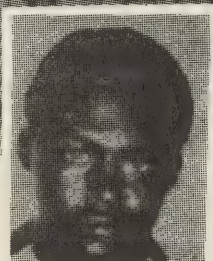
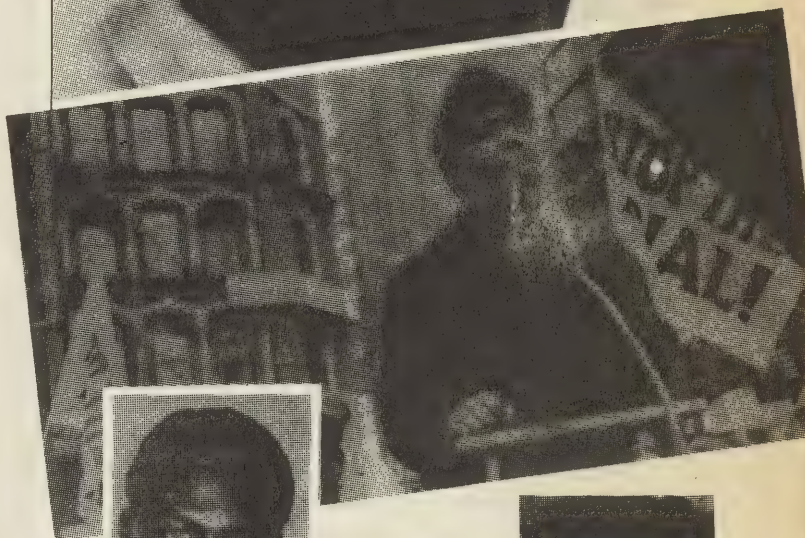
The life of the unemployed in Britain is similar to that of their counterparts in America. Once they leave school, they are faced with menial jobs or no jobs at all — a miserly wage from the state of between £6 to £11 — if they are lucky. On the streets they supplement their income through petty crime, and by involving themselves with one of the many state-funded 'self-help' projects, dropping in and out of the various hostels, community industries and the like. Hostels are usually slums which through 'self-help' youths renovate themselves. Through community industry employers get cut price black labour.

So far the British state has looked to these specially created job programmes and special post-school skilling projects, crash typing courses and the provision of semi-skills, to sap the revolutionary potential of this section of youth. The Principal of Brixton College, Mr. John Sturgeon spells this intention out:-

"People who feel there is no purpose in typing won't fit in to any kind of society. . . You can't keep people down with the police forever. I wanted to create a middle class among the West Indians in order to pacify the district". The only other alternative that the state has to offer this section of the community is prison.

Those organisations and individuals within the black community, who see these projects and schemes as the salvation for the unemployed, do so because they believe that this section is incapable of surfacing from within its ranks an independent, revolutionary alternative.

If nothing else, the Black Panther Party proves that it can.





The Race Today Collective celebrated the second anniversary of the New Race Today on February 7th 1976 at the Brixton Civic Centre. John La Rose, West Indian publisher and political activist, a distinguished figure in the anti-colonial struggles of the Caribbean, gave the feature address — Below, we publish extracts.

### What Is Devolution?

When Edward Short, the British Government Minister responsible for Devolution, made the announcement recently about the proposed constitutional changes for Scotland and Wales, it was like hearing and seeing a faded replay of a scene in the deadly, colonial, constitutional game. Political life in the Caribbean had become pretty familiar with scenes like these, for most of this century.

In the case of the external colony, it was the Secretary of State for the Colonies who made the announcement in the House of Commons here. The colonial governor — supreme functionary of the colonial dictatorship — simultaneously made the announcement there.

Here, in Britain, because it is Scotland and Wales, it is the Minister responsible for Devolution who is the voice of the oracle, not Mr Callaghan the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

With the external colony, it was first the Constitutional Committee, carefully selected by the local administration to get the right result, which sat and sat and finally presented its report. Then, after due passage of time, the Colonial Office delivered its decision.

Here it is the Kilbrandon Committee, carefully chosen we can be sure, which sat and sat and made its report. Then the publication of the Government White Paper followed and Edward Short's necessary public announcement.

Reactions, at the end of the day in the external colony, were similar to those now current in Scotland and Wales. Firstly a massive, vociferous, general disapproval of the constitutional proposals, countered by an immediate acceptance and defence of the same proposals by the most openly pro-imperialist sections of the colony; then the decision by the bourgeois nationalist forces to work the constitution while opposing its limitations. At the same time, the majority nationalist grouping reaffirms its demand for complete and unfettered political power, for political independence, and demands immediate changes in the constitutional proposals which will put more power than proposed into their own hands.

Whatever the constitutions granted, there were always checks and balances written into them to ensure that ultimate power rested with the metropolis — London — economic and financial imperial centre and heartbeat of England, of Britain and its Empire.

In this way, the colonial economic exploitation, whether through preferential or exclusive trade or exploitation of sugar, banana, oil or bauxite, was guaranteed, so long as the colony lasted.

### As We See It

What is happening in the last of England's remaining colonies — in Scotland, Ireland and Wales — will

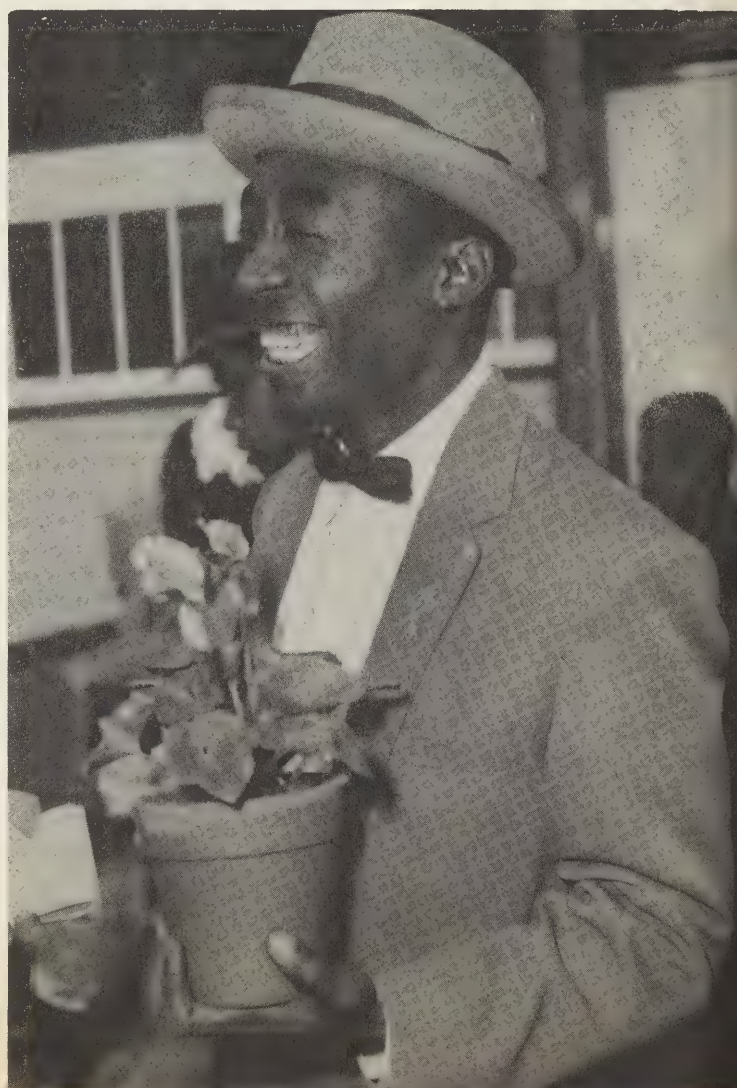
therefore not be new to the worker emigrants from the Caribbean and more so to those sections who were active in the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist, nationalist struggles in the 1940's and 1950's.

Some of the worker emigrants to Britain were active participants in the People's Progressive Party and the People's National Congress in Guyana, the Gairy Party, the Grenada Manual and Mental Workers Union, the Butler Party, the People's National Movement, the People's National Party, the Jamaican Labour Party, the St. Kitts Labour Party, the Antigua Labour Party, the Barbados Labour Party, the West Indian Independence Party and in trade unions and other more radical sections of the nationalist movement which were Marxist and stood for revolutionary social change. They were also active in trade unions and peasant organisations.

All these groupings have also been the leavening here for the early cultural, social and political activity of blacks in Britain.

The encounter with white racism and the manoeuvres of the British capitalist power did not begin in England but in the Caribbean.

# 'WE DID NOT IN BR





"Economically and politically the white man is supreme," Arthur Lewis wrote in *Labour in the West Indies. The Birth of a Workers Movement*, published in 1939 just after the strikes and uprisings from 1935 – 1938. Arthur Lewis continues:

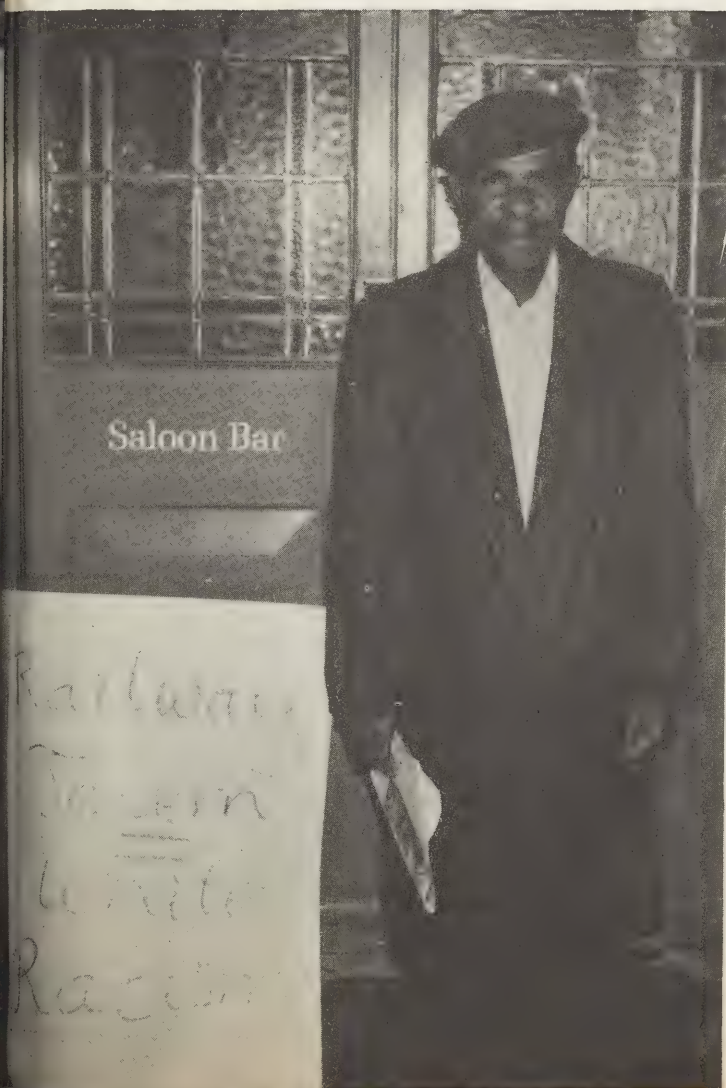
"he owns the biggest plantations, stores and banks, controlling directly and indirectly the entire economic life of the community. It is he whom the governor often nominates to his councils, and for his sons that the best government jobs are reserved. Socially, the whites in general constitute the aristocracy. They run their own clubs from which non-whites are excluded, and it is they who constitute the 'Court' life of 'His Majesty's representative', the Governor."

That was as late as the 1930's, a period of serious crisis of modern capitalism.

This aspect of racism, which in effect is the preservation of economic and social privilege was so naked in a colony that no one could mistake it.

The Caribbean was white minority rule buttressing white economic exploitation and white minority privilege with gradations of colour-classing below. The black worker and peasant were generally at the bottom. Coming to Britain, the emigrants knew that, but they only knew white power at the top.

# COME ALIVE TAIN'



Ron McCormick

What was new was racism from within the white working class. That was strange, especially for the radical nationalist and Marxist sections who believed in the international solidarity of the working class, and who had received messages of solidarity from Britain. They, in particular, had to come to terms with that new situation.

I remember attending a meeting of the North London West Indian Association where it was decided to change their symbol, which until that time, was a white hand clasping a black hand. They said nobody had wanted our black hand, so they were withdrawing it. That was in the early 60's.

Ideology had to be reassessed in terms of experience.

## On A New Terrain

The myth now has it that the black emigrants first came here in 1950/51 on the S.S. Windrush. What did we encounter here?

In Britain there was the declining League of Coloured Peoples, led by Dr Harold Moody and the Caribbean Labour Congress (London Branch). The CLC was a branch of the labour and trade union movement, the Caribbean Labour Congress, which had been formed in the 40's and which in the 1950's was split by the cold war rift between the World Federation of Trade Unions and the ICFTU. These were the most prominent black organisations in Britain at the time. The CLC London Branch was dominated by Communist Party membership.

The emigrants also proceeded to form branches of the politics they had left behind – PPP-PNC branches among Guyanese, JLP-PNP among Jamaicans. With the ascendancy of the PNM in Trinidad from 1955, there was also the PNM London Branch. Politically active West Indians also joined all the left organisations in Britain, besides forming independent underground revolutionary organisations concerned with the struggle for workers' and people's power in the Caribbean.

It was an experience of naked colonialism, accustomed to struggling against the colonial power from abroad, now transferred into the heart of metropolitan oppression. Anti-colonialist politics, black majority consciousness, even then as now not eroded, felt itself part of black people's struggles in Africa, United States, Canada and Asia, especially Vietnam, and in the Caribbean.

More attention was focussed then on the United States where the major black rebellions and struggles were taking place. But the Caribbean was still there and became more seriously part of the black preoccupation with the Rodney Affair in Jamaica in 1968, the Trinidad rebellion and uprising in 1970, Grenada, Martinique and Guadeloupe later, and since.

In Britain, at the time therefore, the blacks developed two types of independent organisations.

- political organisations which were an extension of the radical nationalist and workers' struggles in the Caribbean;
- community organisations like the Brent International Friendship Association and others.

These alone could not provide coherence for the



black population. There were the independent black churches which had been a bulwark against colonial, cultural and social domination. These were re-established here. 'Partners' or 'box' or 'sou-sou' were also formed to buy homes. The cricket club, the All Fours club, all the varied social forms from our past experience were reproduced here.

The Notting Hill and Nottingdale riots in 1958/1959 compelled the early black settlers, with encouragement from Norman Manley and Dr La Corbinere, West Indian Federal politicians, to co-ordinate their efforts and form the West Indian Standing Conference almost 20 years back. The federation of the West Indian islands then in existence, was also extended here to Britain. Some of the political activists from the 40's took the lead. The outlines of independent black political social and cultural organisation were already clear.

### Emerging Struggles

I referred earlier to the experience in the North London West Indian Association and its decision in the early 1960's. This was what was new—the experience at the workplace, the struggle for jobs and job promotion. NLWIA picketed to get black bus inspectors in London Transport as white workers went on strike to prevent black workers being employed. Police went nigger hunting. A booklet called 'Nigger Hunting' was produced by the West Indian Standing Conference to prove this. The Police Federation denied it. Police harassed our home entertainments. Parents became anxious about an education system which they had believed was superior to what they had left behind and which they now found wanting. Historically attached to education as a means of social mobility since the destruction of slavery in the 1830's, the black parent now had to reorient herself/himself to the experience of schooling in Britain.

The black children's experience of schooling led to their rebellion against school, against their parents when they failed to understand, and the society as a whole. But it was through the organisations which were first established that the struggles were fought, these community organisations which at the moment of crisis in 1958/59 joined to form the West Indian Standing Conference.

What I have to say now must be regarded as very important, politically and socially. It was through these same organisations that the group trips back to the Caribbean were organised. This was a novel emigration from the Caribbean, constantly in touch with its roots and interacting with the population at home, helping the youth and workers there to understand the nature of imperialism abroad. Not like the forced emigration from Africa, cut off at source.

It was in the mid-1960's that the black youth intervened politically and pushed black politics and resistance in a more radical independent direction. From the visit of Stokely Carmichael in the summer of 1967 came the UCPA, the Black Panther Movement which later became the Black Workers Movement, the BUFP, the Black Workers Coordinating Committee, the BLF. There was also RAAS, the Black Dimension, Black Eagles and an important

newspaper at that time, *The Hustler*.

Experience with revolutionary white left organisations, up to that time, had convinced black activists who had joined them, that they were petty bourgeois dominated. These organisations had the habits and prejudices of that group and were unable to grasp the issues about the wageless black youth, racism and education and amongst the working class; they were chronically racist themselves, sometimes in an unconscious way like the rest of the society.

There was no turning back from independent revolutionary black politics.

By the end of the 1960's, 1969 to be exact, the Black Education Movement, the Black Schools Movement, CECWA (Caribbean Education and Community Workers' Association) had got under way. The publication of *How the West Indian Child is made Educationally Sub-normal in the British Schooling System* by Bernard Coard, exposed schooling for what it was, like the black youth had already exposed the police and the courts to the society as a whole. The two movements did not coalesce. The black youth political organisations took up the issues raised by the Black Education Movement. The two movements coincided in some of their views and in the issues to be tackled but they travelled independent paths.

### The Way Forward

What is new today is the decline of the black youth political organisations and the rise of internal neo-colonial practices directed at blacks, workers and middle strata, through the NCCI (National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants), later to become the CRC, and soon to be the RRC — police liaison systems being one clear example.

And now emerging from all those struggles and experiences has come the Black Parents' Movement, which, so far, has attempted to form an unconditional alliance with the combative black youth — the students, the waged and the wageless unemployed—in their daily struggles against the police, the schools and the state. This new movement suffers from some of the same ideological weakness which we have experienced in the Caribbean and here. And *Race Today*, in the last two years, has been foremost in attempting to clarify these experiences ideologically so that we can collectively struggle and find our way forward.

The weakness of the black workers' struggles, so far, does not reside in a lack of conception of their sense of power. This historic sense of power and organisation has scored many victories here in the courts, in the schools, in employment, in various kinds of activities and institutions we have established etc. Our weaknesses are those of the past carried over into the present.

*The important struggle we have before us is a struggle over ideology.*

It is no longer enough to respond against the individual grievance but to be clear that the individual grievance is part of a system of grievances with which we are familiar. And that those grievances are not individual acts of oppression simply, but part of a system of oppression which we must



oppose and destroy root and branch, here and in the Caribbean.

The black workers are not yet attuned to a sense of struggle for power in this society.

The way forward by now must be clear from our anti-colonial and anti-imperialist radical and revolutionary struggles at home. And now here. It will involve class struggle within each ethnic group and across ethnic groups as in the Caribbean; and simultaneously within and across nationalities — English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh and other minorities. The left groups in Britain, dominated by an unconscious racism, what we called a certain kind of political symbolism used as cosmetics, ignored and failed to support nationalist demands in Britain. That can no longer be ignored.

A revolutionary nationalism *will* emerge in Scotland and Wales as it already has in Ireland, as it emerged in Vietnam and in the Caribbean.

The multi-ethnic, multi-national, revolutionary class alliance will emerge not only from what revolutionary blacks do, but from what others do as well. Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Angola are examples of how such alliances are formed and triumph.

Nearly all modern European states are multi-ethnic, multi-national societies, centralised. Our international perspective, the black international perspective, will derive from what I have called elsewhere the 'Black People in the World' condition. It's our experience here in Britain which shaped this development. But it will be bolstered by our relationships with Caribbean/Black communities in Canada, USA and of course in the Caribbean.

We blacks have been the leavening for a new perspective in Britain. And it is what Aime Cesaire, the poet, calls our total vision from below that has enabled us to behave here in Britain, in the US, Canada and Africa like we have so far.



United Press International (UK)

Mike Cohen





# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLAS

## ON ANGOLA

*Dear Race Today,*

We are getting fed up with your thinly veiled attacks on the BLF. In common with the Special Branch and the National Front, BLF-bashing seems to be a popular sport for the so-called "black marxist intellectuals" and the "community hustlers" that have been infesting the black movement.

It is very easy for *Race Today* cushioned by a generous World Council of Churches grant to pontificate about "urban aid" and "CRC grants". But we remember when *Race Today* itself obtained grants under the guise of a (non-existent?) 24-hour help-on-arrest service.

It is only common sense that grants dished out for self-help projects should go to community groups that are *genuinely providing useful services to the community*. Rather than be left to be gobbled up in administration and salaries for careerist middle class 'radicals' or by the likes of Michael X. It is our money after all. Self reliance implies that these groups are not dependent on grants for their survival.

Many black groups in the USA and elsewhere supported UNITA in the days of Portuguese colonialism on the basis of the information then available which led them to conclude that it was indeed a liberation movement. It was, at that time, essentially, a matter for the Angolan people in the front line, to decide which movement was reactionary and which movement was revolutionary. It was not for us to judge it, far from the battle, from the comforts of our sitting rooms. But, when it became a matter of UNITA/FNLA inviting white mercenaries and South African troops to massacre black people at the behest of (white) imperialism, it became a major crime against black people everywhere, and a top priority for us to take every available action in support of the MPLA and the Angolan people. It is this position that you so opportunistically denounce as "opportunist".

From Garvey to Lumumba and Malcolm, revolutionary black nationalists and panafricanists have been attacked by "black marxist intellectuals" who preach that black people must unite with white workers to make the revolution. They even go as far as to say that black workers are the vanguard of the revolution. The problem is that if we are to be the vanguard, we are bound to get wiped out for the interests of others.

We are now expected to integrate in a socialist Britain with Powellite dockers, Smithfield meat porters, those excellent 'comrades' from STC and Imperial Typewriters and the unemployed (wageless?) scum who are hurrying off to Angola. You are seeking to reduce the international black struggle for liberation to the level of (white) women's liberation, gay revolution, lesbian revolution, squatter revolution or some other freak revolution. Your collective, Mr Editor, may wish to re-

main on that bandwagon, but we believe that the white worker is able to take good care of himself at the expense of our people in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, and we must take care of our own.

unsigned:

Black Liberation Front.

Golborne Road,

London W.10.

*Dear Race Today,*

I was surprised to see the MPLA given such prominence in your February issue. Your editorial describes the "socialist oriented" MPLA as "obviously a threat to (the) multinationals". Among the list of multinationals operating in Angola you mention Gulf Oil.

Now according to Howard Clark ("Angola: No Puppets", *Peace News*, 6th February) "MPLA finance minister Mingas reportedly says that MPLA's relations with Gulf Oil are very good, and Gulf paid





# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

its third quarter's tax of \$125 million direct to the Luanda government (ie. MPLA), and would have paid its final quarter for 1975 had the US State Department not blocked it. Gulf has thus given MPLA three times as much as the CIA has given FNLA and UNITA combined in the past year". And the MPLA is also reported to have had discussions with Gulf Oil to prevent secession in the oil-rich area of Cabinda. (*Inter-Imperialist Struggle in Africa*, World Revolution Pamphlet No. 3).

This approach to Gulf seems to reflect MPLA's general attitude to the multinationals. Paulo Jorgo, member of MPLA's Central Committee, says, "During discussions with the monopolies we will try to establish agreements which are mutually beneficial" (interview reported in *People's News Service*, 22nd February). So much for being a threat to the multinationals!

On the other side of the industrial coin, so to speak, the MPLA's attitude to workers struggles does not seem to be too "socialist oriented". In March, 1975, the MPLA as part of the then Transitional Government helped implement the decree for the militarisation of labour by breaking dockers strikes in Luanda and Lobito. And the MPLA are on record as being opposed to outbreaks of unofficial strikes not 'properly' organised by the union apparatus. (*Inter-Imperialist Struggle in Africa*).

Let me say that I am not an expert on Angola, nor indeed on African affairs generally. My opinion are based on the sources quoted. I would be interested to hear what you think of all this.

Bob Dent.

## DON'T STOP THE CARNIVAL

Dear Race Today,

I am a white Londoner living in Ladbroke Grove. I participate in carnival and I have seen it grow from strength to strength over the years. Now, a certain section of the white community here is organising to remove carnival from the streets. In doing so, they have allied themselves with the local police force and the council who are equally anxious to stamp out this event, because masses of people, mainly black, from all over England, on the streets, is a demonstration and celebration of our strength.

Working class power in West London during the past 20 years has been black power. From the many struggles fought, whites have gained greatly—a new self respect, a militancy in the young, a readiness to stand up for ourselves as tenants, claimants, or whatever, and an end forever to the tradition of deference. It flows naturally from this state of affairs that we and our children take part in carnival, which is the big social event of the year

around here, easily rivalling Christmas.

If we whites, who see our interests in a strong working class, allow white reactionaries to smash carnival, our position is weakened everywhere—at the schools, in dealing with the police, claiming social security, at the council offices and in our places of work generally. We can't afford to sit on the side lines while the balance of power is tipped in favour of racists and bureaucrats

Linda Willis,  
Westbourne Park Road,  
London W.11.

## BLACKS IN THE POLICE FORCE?

Dear Race Today,

I am replying to Paul Stephenson's backlash in the February issue of *Race Today*, in which he feels that black citizens should join the ranks of the police force. I find it strange that he wants us to join the force when, because of them, we are not free to walk the streets, socialise in clubs or even occupy our homes in peace.

He speaks of black *citizens*; does he not know of the various Immigration Acts passed: firstly, to restrict the entry of more black people into Britain, secondly, to make citizenship extremely difficult to those of us resident here and, thirdly, to forcibly repatriate those who do not conduct themselves in a way the government wants.

So he likes the familiar faces of blacks in Transport and Nurses uniforms? Yes, there are black people in transport uniforms and as well as collecting fares, they collect abuse and insults. One industrious conductor tried to collect a 2p dog fare and got his "eggshell" skull broken. The nurses too have their story to tell. They have to clean and service patients and get thanks such as wog, nigger, coon, sambo, black bastard and bitch. Apart from that the nursing authorities ensure that black nurses work, whatever their qualifications, as auxiliaries

There are large numbers of black faces in police uniforms in the USA and I don't think the relationship between the police and black people has improved. He knows very well what the police feel towards black people and the resultant attitude in response. He also knows of the countless cases proven and unproven of blatant brutality and fabrication of evidence by the police. I would like to remind him of David Oluwale, a destitute Nigerian who was constantly persecuted by two vile policemen until he ended up in a river. The court case revealed how these two men spat on, urinated on, beat and kicked this man until he cried in pain. This man did not choose the way he lived, it was this society that condemned him to destruction. And equally, he did not choose the way he was to



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

leave his miserable life. The remains of David Oluwale now lie in a paupers grave, a grim and constant indictment of British society.

The resentment and deeply held suspicion and the formidable sets of belief Stephenson speaks of are a production of a fact. They are the results of continual police thuggery. This is not fiction.

In Robert Mark's appeal we are being asked to look at uniformed thugs as protectors of the innocent. They have never protected us. They did not protect us from screaming racist mobs in the fifties; they did not protect us from teddy boys with chains; they did not protect us from petrol bombs in Forest Hill; they do not protect us from the guns of the National Front.

The police find it very difficult to "police" black communities inconspicuously; the large transit vans used by the SPG (Special Patrol Group), are as frequent as public transport on the roads. Faced also with undermanning, they now seek to have black faces in uniforms to police the black communities. Putting a wolf in sheep's clothing will not alter the nature or role of the wolf, merely its appearance and tactics.

I suppose more black overseers during slavery would have lessened rebellions, while the conditions of slavery remained unchanged. The conditions that blacks face are products of this society, what can more black police do to change it? With this in mind only particular sorts of people would wish to align themselves with such an institution

Winston Trew.

## BONFIRE NIGHT

This letter was sent from the Black Parents' Movement, London, to the Parents' Action Group in Leeds after the bonfire night confrontation between police and youths, in which 12 youths were arrested. (See page 54).

We have learned of the battle between the black youth in Chapeltown and the Yorkshire Police Force on Bonfire Night, November 5th, 1975. We feel concerned to write to you to express our opinion about this matter and about the court case of the twelve arrested youths which will come to court again in February, 1976.

Our own experience in Hornsey of the conflict between the police and the black youth inside and outside the schools, led us to form on 20th April, 1975, the Black Parents' Movement. The violence of the police against the black youth has been a long and continuing activity, to which the black youth have had to respond unaided in the past. Our first public statement said:

"The black parents in the area are very angry at this molestation, harassment and maltreatment of our children. We are determined to put an end to this abuse."

This statement was issued following the beating up and arrest by the Hornsey police of a black

student, Cliff McDaniel, outside his school on April 17th, 1975.

Black youths and parents have now joined together in a struggle to defend ourselves. Not only are the youths on the receiving end of this police abuse, but parents as well. A Black Students' Movement was formed a few days after the founding of the Black Parents' Movement, and our organisations work in close alliance with each other. We see this kind of alliance as fundamental to all the struggles the black community will have to wage in future in this society.

We have so far been involved in two major court cases: the case of Cliff McDaniel in Hornsey, which led to the formation of our Movement, and the case of four black school girls at Clapton Park Comprehensive School, Hackney. These cases, and the political activity we organised around them, have become an important part of the experience of our organisation.

Firstly, our Movement committed itself to uncompromising support of the youths involved in the court cases. Secondly, it was totally involved in the detailed preparation of the evidence in the cases, so that the planning of the legal defence did not become a matter only for the lawyers but for the entire organisation as well. Thirdly, we mobilised support from within our own community. We issued statements and leaflets, called public meetings, and convened regular internal meetings which at all times discussed the court cases and the next action to be taken. In our political mobilisation we also picketed a conference for teachers, probation officers, social workers and local authority councillors and aldermen, organised by the local police authorities on black youth. On the days the cases were heard in court, parents and youths from the Movement turned out in force to picket the court outside, and to be present inside.

We have said all this because we hope it may be of use to the youths, parents and other sections of the black community in Leeds in dealing with this present conflict.

We know that parents in Chapeltown are veterans of their own battles against the policies of a racist education authority and the conditions in schools; in particular the struggle at Cowper Street School, where, in 1973, a victory was won when black parents formed a Parents Action Group, and withdrew their children from the school in a strike to remove a racist headmaster.

This victory was an example to us all. It showed that schools which do not function in the interest of our community, cannot function at all without our support.

We hope you will keep us informed of what is taking place and what you are doing, so that we can publicise this information here in London.

Black Parents' Movement.



# REVIEWS

**Sherry and Wine,**  
by Jimi Rand, presented by the Temba Theatre  
Company at the Theatre at New End.

Just as dramatic art mirrors life, so black actors are finding, in common with other black workers, that the most effective way of realising their full potential at the present time, is to organise independently of their white colleagues and the existing theatre structure.

One group of black artists who have pursued this line of action are the Temba Theatre Company. Formed in 1972, under the artistic direction of Alton Kumalo, actor and South African political exile, the Company has established a precedent for using professionally accomplished actors and selecting plays whose themes are of vital relevance to black people.

The Company's latest production, a short two-act play called "Sherry and Wine", invites us to step inside the living room of a West Indian family. The father is nostalgic for the "sweet life" back home, and his university educated daughter has hopes of a brave new world in a multi-racial Britain. The immigrant father and the British-born-and-bred West Indian daughter have both to come to terms with living in a Britain riddled with class and racial prejudice. Actor and playwright Jimi Rand has attempted to deal with the preoccupations of West Indians caught in this particular situation.

The disciplined and controlled timing of actresses, Isabelle Lucas as mother, and Valerie Murray as her best friend, enables the play to work at a level of sheer entertainment. The pretensions of the former, and the scheming and meddling of the latter

when the eldest daughter of the house invites her boyfriend, a good catch, home for a family meal, provides a universally comic situation which the two women make particularly Caribbean. This potential to create a truly Caribbean character is also evident in the author's conception and development of the character of Orlando, whose howls of disbelief and desperation when he is served "English water soup" and "bush", instead of his expected rice and peas, again depicts accurately a Caribbean type.

The Temba Theatre Company commands our attention and critical appraisal, for it is their avowed intention "to give artistic expression to black culture."

Music has traditionally been the major medium for black cultural expression in the West, and this has recently been further reinforced by the current ascendancy of reggae as a major cultural force affecting and unifying, at some levels, different sections of the black community — not to mention some sections of the white community.

Theatre in Europe and North America, where there is a relatively mass black settlement, is traditionally associated with white culture. There is however a precedent for non-Western European peoples using a traditionally western medium such as the cinema, as in present day Japan and India, and using it to express their particular culture.

It remains to be seen whether the Temba Theatre Company, and the other cultural enterprises like it, will be able to use the existing media available to artists, and invest the resulting cultural activity with a black identity.

Akua Rugg  
Race Today Collective.





# REVIEW NOTES



Arista Records

## GIL SCOTT-HERON.

Gil Scott-Heron, a 26 year old American poet, novelist and musician, had his first British tour in February 1976. His music was given its first live airing to audiences through a series of concerts, which included university campuses and one television programme, culminating in a performance at the Victoria Palace Theatre in London.

Black American music has, with few exceptions, gained international success without diluting the experience that it seeks to express. The music has gone through many different phases, from spirituals, blues, jazz, soul, motown to the present day sophisticated 'philly' sounds. Scott-Heron's art and music stems from the experience of young black college radicals, influenced by the black rebellions of the early 60's. His musical backing, provided by his partners, Brian Jackson and the Midnight Band, capture all that is exciting in the newest jazz/funk rhythms. But in his attempt to be politically meaningful in his lyrics, to convey a message to black people, Heron sometimes seems dated, almost

slick. His lyrics still echo the nationalism of the early 60's and he ends up repeating well worn cliches. On the other hand, he is capable of singing delicate ballads which show a poetic subtlety.

Unfortunately, his British audiences were not treated to his ballads. He performed those songs which he hopes will bring him commercial success. His latest single 'Johannesburg' works through the formula of a catchy tune that has a meaningful message.

*Well, I hate it when the blood starts flowin'  
But I'm glad to see resistance growin'  
Somebody tell me what's the word?  
Tell me brother, have you heard from  
Johannesburg?*

A small proportion of his audience were young blacks, but it is doubtful whether in Britain, Scott-Heron will be able to reach all sections of the black community. The increasing numbers of college going blacks are likely to be his record buyers.

Race Today Collective.



### From Sambo to Superspade

#### The Black Experience in Motion Pictures.

by Daniel J. Leab.

Published by Secker and Warburg 1975 Price £5.50.

Leab's book covers seventy years of blacks in American movies — from the silent period, when blacks would never appear in movies about themselves but instead would be played by white actors in burnt cork make-up ("blacks having no acting ability"), to the present day. The author describes the legal battles and protests mounted by NAACP over D.W. Griffiths' artistic but despicable 'Birth of a Nation', whose success depended upon a reinforced racist attitude towards blacks which had been prevalent since Reconstruction after the Civil War.

The movie industry, and thereby American society, had stereotyped the black to fit into its racist prejudices. Leab then goes on to describe how this attitude became inverted in the 20's and 30's by black movie companies which were usually set up to capitalise on the 'ghetto' market.

These companies got their finance and distribution from white producers. Therefore even the most progressive of them, who wished to bring some self respect into their films, and thereby into the movie houses, found it impossible. They were told what would and would not sell to black audiences, so these companies were destroyed and the illusions persisted.

Many black artists hoped that with the introduction of sound in the late 20's black people would be able to express themselves as themselves rather than figments of a racist imagination. But a movie called 'The Jazz Singer', featuring Al Jolson in black make-up, pointed the way things would be for the next 25 years, apart from an increase in bit parts and supporting roles.

Leab points to the new image of the black in Hollywood in the 50's and 60's, influenced by the new consciousness amongst blacks generated through the civil rights struggle. The industry realised that a few 'negro problem' pictures in the early 50's were not going to be enough to reap the potential profits of the black market. Hollywood stepped very gingerly into the sex/race miasma it had had a major hand in shaping, by making movies about inter-racial relationships and feelings of guilt.

But towards the late 60's, reflecting a growing black American aggressiveness, production money was put into the new caricature, the super-screwing, super-stud movie, which plays well to audiences of the black unemployed in the inner city.

Leab's book is limited in that it deals only with actors and acting, and not with black stuntmen and technicians who have a particular history of struggle for recognition in the film industry. Nevertheless, Leab has done an excellent job in researching the book, leaving one in the end to form one's own conclusions about the social significance of the subject matter.

Roy Cornwall.

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# Race Today

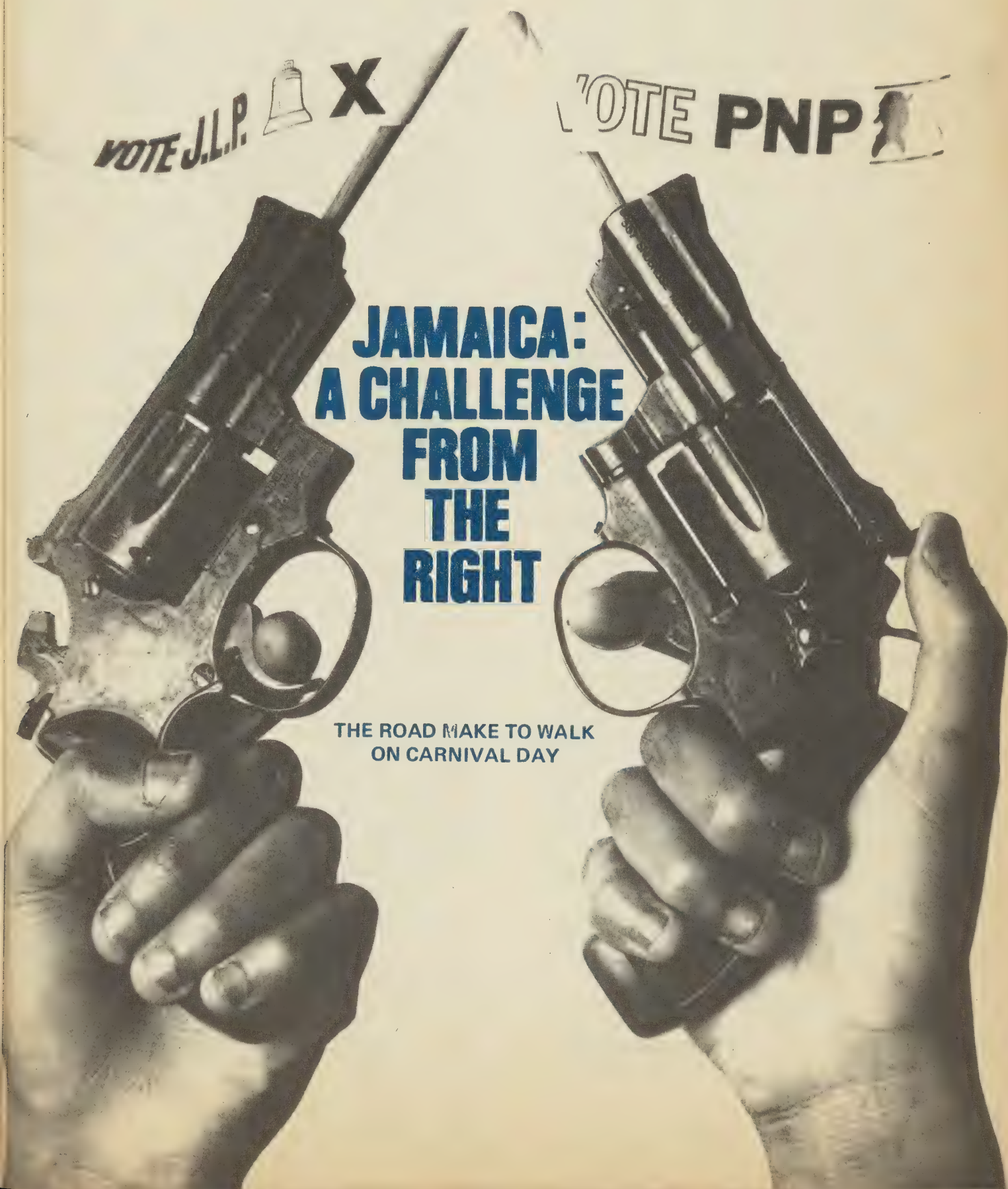
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## JAMAICA: A CHALLENGE FROM THE RIGHT

THE ROAD MAKE TO WALK  
ON CARNIVAL DAY





# LETTERS

Trotter responds to the *Race Today* petition. See *Race Today*, Vol. 8 No. 2, February 1976.

*Salamu Race Today,*

May the blessings of Jah Rastafari guide and protect thee along the righteous path of human liberation.

Mankind within these dens of Babylon continuing to struggle on to maintain I & I principles as Rasta. Despite great tribulations, Mankind able to withstand and stand firm.

Man must express the deepest of appreciation for the efforts of all those who, through their own limited way, seek to gain I freedom and right a grievous wrong. I have seen the copies of the petition that were forwarded to Callaghan and the Premier and ask of thee that you share profound solidarity with the brethren concerned.

The struggle within this society has taken on new dimensions, with brethren realising that change can only be effectively realised through grass root organisation based on the development of co-operative bodies within all the spheres of production. Thus, platform politics have been discarded and brethren are now seriously engaged in the gradual yet most meaningful process of practical dialogue among the rural masses.

The repression to which Babylon subjected Mankind has had its effect, in that a noticeable amount of brethren have backslided and clearly indicating their lack of commitment and unwillingness to bear up to sacrifice. Their petty bourgeois mentality has been clearly exposed. However, those brethren who have remained firm have greatly gained from this experience, becoming *ever* vigilant and greater committed. From these ranks shall the *foundation* be formed, establishing a firm and united base.

The glorious victories of the conquering Lions of Angola bring to light historical developments of great dimensions. The inevitable collapse of the Babylon empire within Southern Africa is now signed.

It must never be forgotten though, that considering the barbarity of Babylon and realising their predicament, the fascist murderers of Anzania may endeavour to unleash a nuclear warhead in a last ditch attempt to maintain her rule. Though she has not officially stated her success in building an atomic bomb, she has the means and the know-how at her disposal to realise one. History however shall determine this, as it has already determined that the *solidarity* shown by Cuban brethren will forever be an integral part of the revolutionary process in Africa.

The time is at hand, brethren, for all African people, for all oppressed humanity to "*get up and get*". It is the duty of all of us to instill and maintain this historic reality in the minds of all our fellow oppressed and exploited brethren.

One Love! Rasta Forever!

Kabinda.

## 'Independent' UKIAS

*Dear Race Today,*

I refer to the letter from John Ennals of the UKIAS, in your February 1976 issue.

It is well known to all of us in the immigration field that on every refusal form which the Home Office gives to immigrants, there is a recommendation that they, the immigrants, should consult the UKIAS about their problems.

If the UKIAS were to be genuine about their protestations of independence, they should immediately insist that their names be excluded from refusal forms, or that the names of *all* sources of advice and assistance be included.

As it is, they are a blatantly preferred organisation. In fact, as far as the Home Office is concerned, the *only* preferred organisation. This makes nonsense of their claims to independence. They are also financed by the Home Office, and more significantly, they are the *only* immigrant organisation so financed.

In effect, they are a bureaucratic arm of the Home Office, assisting with its administrative work load.

They could do many substantial things to assert independence, but they choose to write letters to the papers instead.

They could, for instance, join in the protest against indiscriminate police raids on factories and immigrants' homes. The Minister for Immigration has, after all, stated that one of the principal objects of immigration control *at the border*, is to avoid creating a police state *within*. What disgusting hypocrisy!

And the UKIAS, with its open hot line to the Home Office, raises not a whisper. So stiff upper lip old chaps, let's not rock the boat!

Reuben Davis,  
Greek & Turkish Cypriot  
Advice Centre,  
London N.4.

*Dear Race Today,*

May we, through your journal, ask immigrant teachers to get in touch with us to facilitate communication and exchange information for the purpose of organising a national conference of immigrant teachers sponsored by the newly formed Society of Immigrant Teachers.

We failed to get names of immigrant teachers from local education authorities and the DES.

The SIT aims to promote multi-racial and multi-cultural education, fight against racism in all its forms and manifestations in the field of education, fight against discrimination in employment, redundancy and for promotional prospects of immigrant teachers, and others employed in the educational service.

Sam Alam and I. Goddard,  
Joint Convenors of SIT,  
London, NW10.



# EDITORIAL

## OUR POSITION ON CARNIVAL '76

The 1976 Notting Hill Carnival is five months away. It is celebrated yearly over the bank holiday week-end in August. Last year, our tenth anniversary, this West Indian festival attracted some quarter of a million people. It was a tremendous success and it is not unreasonable to expect an increase in numbers at this year's celebrations.

There is an organising committee responsible for the event. It has a constitution of its own and the committee includes all the different groups whose activities form the body of the Carnival — steelbandmen, soundmen, masqueraders, organisers of competitions and other individuals.

In any event, the technical detail involved in bringing order to a Carnival in which 250,000 people participate is immense. The organisers face a herculean task in 1976.

This task is further complicated by the intervention of a small local group of whites whose outpourings and protests have received wide publicity and an over-sympathetic hearing from sections of the local police and councillors in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

As we have outlined in both this issue and the February issue of *Race Today* 1976, the opposition group says that the event is a nuisance to residents in the neighbourhood and must be removed.

Rather than make attempts to iron out their grievances with the local organisers of the event, the opposition group has, instead, rushed into print with dramatic statements. They have, as well, sought, and it appears successfully, to enlist the power of the police and a majority of local councillors to their cause.

As a result, the local councillors and the police have further aggravated the situation. They suggest that the festival be removed to the White City Stadium or Battersea Park. Both suggestions, if implemented, will destroy the very structure and basis of Carnival. By its very nature, Carnival is a street festival.

Imagine residents who live near the Oval or Lords inconvenienced, as some are, by five days of test cricket lodge a protest. Or indeed, the residents at Wembley, as they have done, protest the inconvenience of the FA Cup Final. Is it conceivable that any local council or police dare suggest to the MCC that, as an alternative, the Test Match be

played in the nets of some local cricket club? Or that the FA cup final be reduced to a five-a-side game at some local school playground?

No, they dare not. Both the MCC and the FA enjoy the power of established political patronage. That is to say, they are well connected in the central areas of political power. The Carnival organising committee is not so connected but we have a power all our own. We have the support of thousands of West Indians in the community and throughout Britain. We have, too, the capacity to mobilise them against any attempt to push us around.

It is the responsibility of the authorities not to provoke the black community lest the tradition of black militancy in Notting Hill has to again assert itself.

The organising committee is not without responsibility in this matter either. We aim to hit the streets of Notting Hill for Carnival 1976. To this end, a meeting of the general organisation must be called immediately and a detailed account of all that has happened to date be made available to that meeting. We must demand of the council and the police that they put a stop to all speculation by publicly endorsing that Carnival be held on the streets of Notting Hill.

In that very meeting, we outline a programme for 1976 and state what resources are needed to bring order and organisation to the event. The programme for '76 will take into consideration the real grievances of the opposition group. Those grievances will be established and documented by a delegation from the committee mandated to discuss with the opposition group what the problems are. The police and local council must be excluded from that meeting. This is a matter for the residents of the community whose interests are not the same as those of officials.

It is on the basis of the programme which evolves out of this process that we carry on further discussions with the police and the local council.

Central to this process is the fact that the West Indian community throughout Britain be informed of what is happening at every stage.

Once that is done, we would ensure that we have executed our responsibility in making Carnival '76 not only possible but successfully organised. Should events turn out otherwise then the responsibility for that falls with the local council and the police.

Race Today Collective April 1976.

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Ron McCormick

## THE ROAD MAKE TO WALK ON CARNIVAL DAY

On Tuesday March 23rd, the Notting Hill Social Council, a non-statutory organisation funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, called a public meeting. The organisers wanted to test public opinion on the Carnival issue. Close to 100 local residents, black and white, attended and the entire meeting, with the exception of two abstentions, supported the final resolution:

*The meeting moves that Carnival is acceptable to the majority of people in Notting Hill, and it is the wish of the meeting that Carnival continues to be held on the streets of Notting Hill. We invite the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to appreciate that Carnival belongs to the people of Notting Hill and that they should be left free to organise it in a manner acceptable to the majority, as always. And the meeting also points out that it is the duty of the council to assist the organisers of Carnival to enhance the welfare of the Carnival celebrations to the fullness of the Council's ability and in consistency with the wishes of the Carnival organisers.*

In the February issue of *Race Today*, we alerted our readership to the proposition placed before the Carnival organising committee by local councillors. They called on the committee to remove the bank holiday festival off the streets of Notting Hill to the White City Stadium.

The legal position is this — the local council has no power to ban the celebrations. Only the Home Secretary can do that, enforcing his order with police power.

In actual fact, the suggestion to move the Carnival to White City came from the Vice Chairman of the Voluntary Organisation's Committee, Pat Methuen. This committee dispenses council funds to voluntary organisations, the Carnival committee included. Methuen's proposal remains in the realm of an individual's suggestion, since the issue has never been debated in open council.

Yet another suggestion has been advanced, this time by the Chief Superintendent of Police, Ron

Patterson. He suggests that we move to Battersea Park, one guesses, in the tradition of that olde English institution, the Easter Parade.

These suggestions are in response to the rantings of a small pressure group, spear-headed by a Mrs Lennon of the Cambridge Gardens Tenants Association and the Committee of One Hundred led by a local opportunist, George Clark, whose news-rag, *The Golborne*, acts as the platform for their views.

It will take the most agile of interpretations to pin down precisely where the opposition is coming from. In short, what is their stance? We

itemise a list of positions published in *The Golborne* between September 1975 up till now.

September 1975. "The *Golborne* says these people (local residents) are right and says that a new site must be found and everything must be done to make the Carnival a national bank holiday event in the heart of London"

30th January 1976. "They (the local people) are not against the Carnival as such but they are insisting that proper control be maintained."

27th February 1976 "A 72 hour night razz-matazz with canned music blaring through the night is clearly a real nuisance"

19th March 1976. "These are the things that are wrong with Carnival. But this does not mean it should be stopped. I agree with the West Indian community when they say all the fun will be lost if it does not go through the streets of Notting Hill."

26th March 1976. "Judging from the sheer numbers of people who have protested to us, there seems to be a clear majority in the neighbourhood against holding the Carnival in our local streets."



## LINKING THE STRUGGLES

It is on the peg of these confused range of positions that the police and Tory councillors appear to hang their suggestions.

Pat Webster represents the Golborne Ward as the local Labour Party councillor. She begins by speaking to the latest position advanced by *The Golborne*:

*"It is just not true that a majority in the neighbourhood is against the Carnival being held on the streets of Notting Hill"*.

She then points out that at the public meeting organised by the Notting Hill Social Council, George Clark was present. It was three days before the publication date of *The Golborne*, and there, Clark gave his support for the Carnival to be held on the streets of Notting Hill. He voted for the resolution. He never mentioned once that *"there seems to be a clear majority in the neighbourhood against holding the Carnival in our local streets"*.

*"Dangerous"*! is how she described the antics of the opposition. Her experiences in the last few weeks lead her to the conclusion that the anti-Carnival campaign has had the effect *"of stirring up anti-black feeling in the area, encouraging white local people to say it's dirty and black"*.

Let Chief Superintendent Patterson and the local Conservative Party councillors take the responsibility for pandering to this campaign — so dangerously pursued, so mischievously contrived.

They claim to have in their possession a petition with some 500 signatures which support 'the get rid of Carnival' campaign. Do they want the Carnival Committee to organise a similar petition supporting the Carnival before they desist? We do not have to. The numbers participating in the celebrations from the local community is proof positive of our strength and support. We must be careful, on this issue, not to lump Patterson with the local police force. Other officers, including a Senior Police officer, have gone on record in support of the event.

Those public figures who hold positions of power in relation to this issue — the police and local councillors — have, as their responsibility, to scan the outpourings of the opposition to divine the nature and content of the protest. Any blind fool is able to detect the malice, inconsistency and at best, insensitivity of the opposition's campaign. To pander, nay to bow to Mrs Lennon's and George Clark's mischief suggests two things. Either local councillors and sections of the police are using the campaign to express their own bias and prejudice or they are guilty of the most wanton dereliction of duty. In any case, they will have to invoke the most merciless repression in order to keep the Carnival off the streets of Notting Hill.

Perhaps, they ought to be reminded of the words of one of Trinidad's immortal calypsonians, the Lord Kitchener: 'The Road Make To Walk On Carnival Day.'



John McCormick



## AFFRAY: A POLICE WEAPON

A £25,000 advertising campaign directed at recruiting young blacks into the Metropolitan police force yielded no new recruits. This information formed part of the evidence presented by community relations chief, Commander Marshall, to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Race Relations.

It is not simply that young blacks are refusing to join the police force. Commander Marshall states that they are otherwise active:

"Recently, there has been a growth in the tendency for members of London's West Indian communities to combine against police by interfering with police officers who are effecting the arrest of a black person. . . In the last 12 months, 40 such incidents have been recorded. Each carries a potential for large scale disorder."

Nowhere in the Commander's evidence are we informed of the State's policy in dealing with these conflicts. He simply describes them as doing nothing "to ease the mounting pressures with which operational officers are being burdened."

The reality is different. Police officers, while through one side of their mouths preach 'good community relations', demand, through the other, their pound of flesh.

It was in the summer of 1970 that they introduced the charge of affray as a weapon of retribution and repression. The charge was first used against blacks in the notorious Mangrove 9 case.

This is how they proceed. An incident takes place — a clash between police and young blacks — and several young blacks are arrested. Ordinary charges follow, for example, assault, threatening behaviour etc. Meanwhile, another process is set in motion. A senior police officer is placed in charge of the investigation. He collects statements from police officers and from sympathetic civilian whites found in a door to door search near the scene of the incident. He knows what he is looking for and these statements are peppered with the right terminology. The case papers are then forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions and lands on the desk of a legally qualified civil servant working in that department. Reading through the evidence, the civil servant spots the right terminology and returns indictments of affray. This usually takes a period of five to six weeks after the original incident.

The defendants appear in court on the original charges and one fine morning are confronted with the charges of affray. Briefly, this charge is defined

as 'fighting to the terror of the Queen's Subjects', the latter being the terrified civilians who witness the incident behind their window curtains.

Affray charges carry limitless terms of imprisonment.

Side by side with the introduction of affray as a political charge, the black community evolved a counter strategy — militant and aggressive cross-examination of police officers in the courts, propaganda and mobilisation of the black community outside of the courts.

In order to execute the former, the black community had to find or create lawyers. White lawyers are notorious for defusing the reality of confrontation that pervades these trials. To carry on propaganda and mobilisation campaigns outside the courts we have had to surface our own publications, established journals being either notoriously pro-police or in the pursuit of 'fairness to both sides', whatever that means, they fail to grasp the reality of the black experience altogether.

In recent cases of affray, as in the Cricklewood and Hornsey trials, a battery of black lawyers were in attendance. Today, both these lawyers and the publications which seek to represent black interests are under attack.

Listen to Commander Marshall in evidence to the Select Committee:

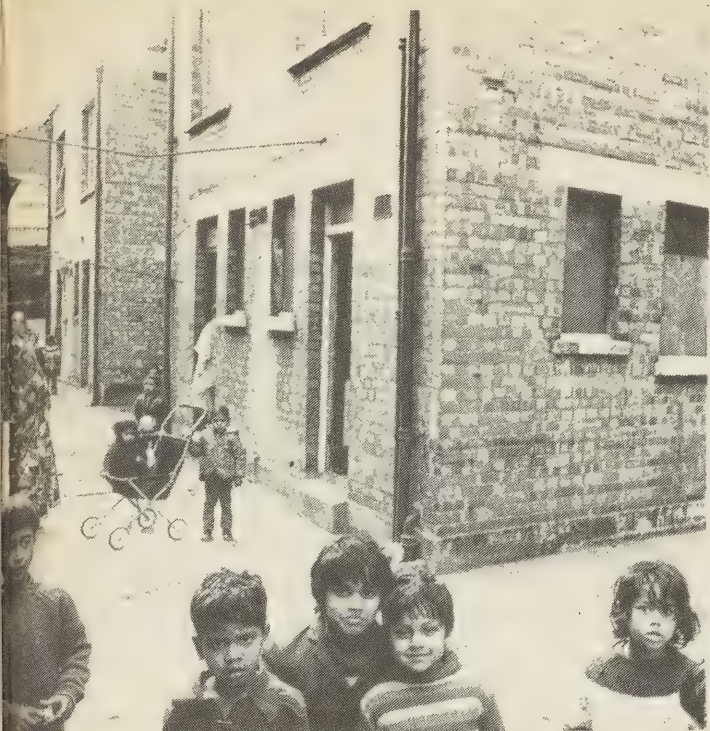
"Nevertheless, continual editorial villification of police and other social agencies, distorted accounts of court proceedings, and repetition and exaggeration of unsubstantiated and one-sided complaints of police 'brutality', which forms the sterile basis of a number of ethnic newspapers and periodicals, have a culminative effect on the state of police/black relationships. . ."

Not charges of affray, mind you.

Black lawyers have not escaped either. In the Hornsey Trial, eight young blacks were charged with affray following clashes with police in North London. The defence briefed 16 barristers, a lead barrister and a junior for each client. The trial judge, Judge Clarke QC, proceeded, before hearing evidence, to interrogate the black lawyers. Only two, he suggested, were qualified to act as leading counsel. Nowhere in the regulations is it stipulated that a barrister must be this or that before he is qualified to lead. Next, Clarke got out the Law List and questioned the barristers about their dates of call and the addresses of their chambers. It seems he was questioning whether they were barristers at all. This became clearer when he cross questioned barrister-at-law, Gary Webb, as to why his name was not on the list. No one could remember, in the history of the law courts, such a humiliating attack on counsel.

It would appear that the struggle for 'good black/police relations' has become so crucial for the police that they and sections of the judiciary are prepared to attack all progressive black institutions to secure it.





Julian Stapleton

## ATTACK ON BENGALIS

On Old Montague Street in the East End of London, a row of houses are occupied by Bengali workers. They have squatted there when faced with the alternative of homelessness. Along with the *Race Today* Collective, the Bengalis have organised themselves in the Bengali Housing Action Group (BHAG) to wage a struggle for decent housing with modern amenities.

There are no phones in these homes which are due for demolition within the next few months. For emergencies and other personal connections, the Bengalis, who occupy these buildings, make use of the public phone 200 yards away.

On March 22nd, 37 year old Mujir-ud-din Ahmed was on his way back to his squat after making a phone call. Fifteen to twenty young whites set upon Mujir and beat him to the ground, robbing him of £4. He tried to reach his home and the white mob pursued him and kicked him unconscious. His wife, Shaif-un-Nessa, threw herself over him to protect him from further blows. She too was kicked and cut about the face.

Takul Miah, Abdul Mohid, Mashuk Miah and Moti-ur-Rahman, who live in the same row of houses, came out to protect Mujir and his wife. They too were assaulted and injured in the fifteen minute battle that followed.

The police arrived. Two culprits were identified on the spot and, we presume, arrested. Mujir was taken to hospital unconscious, eventually to recover with a fractured skull and a broken nose.

The Bengalis were questioned and statements were taken from four of them by the police. One week later, not a single Bengali worker involved could tell whether, if at all, anyone was charged; if they were, when and where would the court hearing be. They knew not why Mujir's wife was not interviewed or a statement taken from her.

One would expect, at least, return visits by the police to clarify and inform the victims of what processes were in motion —no, nothing of the kind.

On Thursday 25th, the Assistant Editor of *Race Today* spoke on the phone to Detective Constable Nicholls at the Bethnal Green Police Station. These were his words. "There are three points:

1. Those apprehended are juveniles and we don't charge juveniles.
  2. The only victim is in hospital and has not been interviewed yet.
  3. All the witnesses' statements are in Bengali and have to be interpreted back into the English language.
- The statements will be back on Monday and I will be seeing the doctor tomorrow. On Monday I will be in a better position to know what the situation is".

Those were his words — D.C. Nicholls of the Bethnal Green Station.

If "we don't charge juveniles", then what are juvenile courts for? Mujir is not the only victim. How about Mrs Shaif-un-Nessa, Takul Miah, Mr Abdul Mohid, Mr Mashuk Miah, Mr Moti-ur-Rahman? There are at least six assaults involved, assaults of varying degrees. And we are quite sure that if the police apprehend a Bengali suspect they do not have to wait until translated statements are returned before charges are laid.

We called D.C. Nicholls on the following Tuesday as he suggested. He had a different line:

*"We are now aware of what is happening; the matter is sub judice and I can say no more".*

That, in sum, is the position to date. Members of BHAG and the *Race Today* Collective met on March 25th at Old Montague Street. Three points were agreed to:

1. That where the lives of Bengalis are threatened and the authorities responsible are as slipshod as the police have been, then physical defence is legitimate. Counter-attack is an equally legitimate form of defence.
2. That the Home Secretary be informed that attacks on Bengalis, a frequent occurrence in the East End, are just not on and the time has come for a political initiative from the Home Office.
3. That the Home Secretary sees to it that the victims are provided forthwith with information relating to arrests and charges.



# TROTTER REPRIEVED

... I was asked if I knew anything about the shooting of a white man for which Desmond Trotter was eventually charged. I answered no. The police officer then asked me if I knew Desmond Trotter and one Roy Mason, to whom I answered no. The police officer then described the two persons to me. He said, "Desmond Trotter is fair and has locks and missing a tooth in the upper jaw. Roy Mason is dark with long locks and has a gold tooth in front". He then asked me further if I ever saw them. I said no. I was then told by police officer Toulon, "look, I want you to do something for us." I asked him what. He said, "I want you to make a statement saying that you heard Desmond say he shot a white man."

... The following day at 9 o'clock a group of boys were brought into the police station and the police officer, his name I do not remember came to me and said, "Desmond Trotter is the fourth person in the line." The police officer then told

me to go into the room. Then I went into the room where I saw eight or nine young men. One Mr. Joseph, the Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) in charge of the CID, said, "Miss Camilla Francis, you made a statement that you heard Desmond Trotter say on the night of the 24th February 1974 he shot a white man on the corner of Queen Mary and River Streets. Identify the one who said so. I then pointed at the 4th person in the line as I was told by the police officer. The police officer told me to ask Desmond to smile. Desmond shook his head then smiled.

These quotes are taken from an affidavit sworn by Camilla Francis at the Office of the Premier of Antigua on March 30th 1976.

Remember Camilla Francis? She was the main prosecution witness in the trial of Desmond Trotter, the Dominican political activist. Trotter was charged with the murder of John Jirasek and sentenced to hang. The Privy Council in London, on March 8th, refused Trotter's application for leave to appeal.

Jirasek was holidaying on the West Indian island of Dominica when a period of intense rebellion developed from within the urban unemployed and the peasantry. He was shot on February 24th 1974. He died on the following day at the local hospital.

Desmond Trotter was involved in both areas of the rebellion against local employers and the state. As a result he had been a target of harassment by the local police. Desmond edited the journal *Twaway* which gave voice to the movement as a whole.

Trotter was charged with the murder after being identified by Camilla Francis, an Antiguan visitor to the island. She claimed that Trotter told her, on the night of the 24th, that he had just killed a white man. Testimony to the effect that Desmond was, at the relevant time, in bed suffering from an attack of asthma failed to convince a jury of property owners.

Following the decision of the Privy Council, the only option left to Trotter was clemency from the Mercy Committee, chaired by Premier Patrick John. Only a few days before the existence of the affidavit was made public, Patrick John, the pro-hanging Premier, went on record as follows:

"Better a dead hero than a live one who returns to haunt us".

By the way, the affidavit was signed by Camilla Francis in the presence of members of the American Human Rights Committee — a member of the Committee for Latin American and National Caribbean Countries of Christ, a member of the Jesuit Social Apostles and a member of the National Conference of Black Lawyers.

The Mercy Committee met, each with a copy of the affidavit. A phone call from Desmond's brother, Garner Trotter, to the *Race Today's* office, 10.15 pm, 2.4.76 confirmed, "Desmond is reprieved— A new lease of life."



# REPUBLIC IN TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

The government of Trinidad and Tobago threatens to seize additional powers in a Republic Bill which is presently before Parliament.

Trinidad and Tobago will 'enjoy' Republican status within the next few weeks, says the Republic Bill. Meanwhile, there will be a transitional period during which the authority of the Prime Minister will be extended.

The ruling party, the Peoples National Movement, came to power in 1956 and has ruled the country to date. From 1970 onwards, there developed within the country a massive movement against the regime, forcing the Prime Minister to call three States of Emergency, intern Trade Unionists, leaders of community organisations and students.

Several pieces of legislation have been passed – prohibiting demonstrations, limiting public meetings, banning literature and extending the powers of the police.

In the last elections, a successful boycott campaign led to all the 36 seats in Parliament going to the PNM. They received the support of 28% of the electorate.

Opposition to the regime reached its highest point with the formation of the United Labour Front on 18th March 1975. It is exclusively a working class organisation, a unified political front of four trade unions – oilworkers, sugar workers, canefarmers, transport and industrial workers.

The United Labour Front is spear-heading the mobilisation of the whole population against this attempt "to take away many of the rights and freedoms which our people now enjoy". The ULF leaders called a conference of all parties, groups, unions and community associations in order to chart the course of struggle "against this oppressive piece of legislation. . . which ushers in an era of tyranny and oppression".

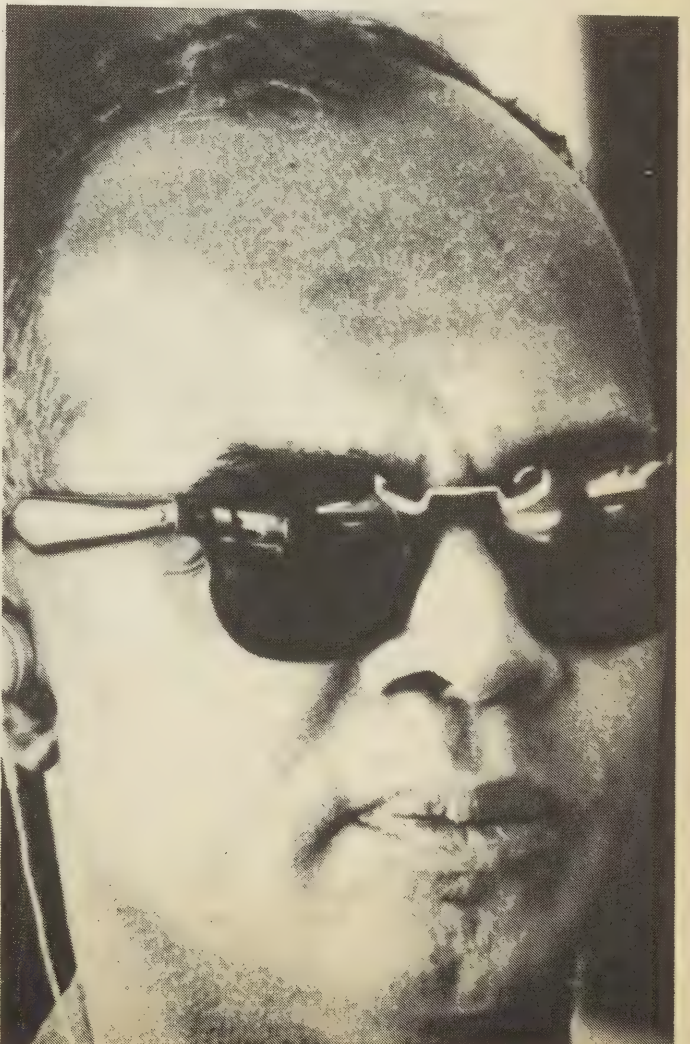
The conference was held in the capital city, Port of Spain, at the northern headquarters of the Oilfield

Workers Trade Union. On March 19th, there gathered the Marxists, Socialists of all hues, Pan Africanists, Reformist Parliamentarians, Social Democrats, in short all shades of opposition to the regime. Meanwhile, the Bar Association issued a statement warning the population that the bill before parliament "effectively destroys all those human rights and fundamental freedoms without which democracy cannot survive".

This historic meeting concluded with the decision to form the United People's Front, pledged to a massive campaign aimed at defeating the threat posed by the government's attempt to seize additional powers.

The *Race Today* Collective have, since our formation, reflected in our journal a consistent pre-occupation and involvement with the political processes alive in the countries from which we have migrated. Trinidad and Tobago has been no exception. We have condensed our position in this crucial moment of the country's history in the following telegram to fraternal sections of the United People's Front:

'The *Race Today* Collective (UK) support organised action led by the working class against government's threat to seize additional powers. The question is posed – State Power to the working class, When and How?'





On March 19th, 1976 there exploded in Jamaica what amounts to an organised and armed challenge to the government in power. Arson and assassinations executed by organised gunmen carried further four years of threats and outbursts from the extreme right wing in Jamaican politics.

Below, Richard Hart, former member of the left faction of the ruling Peoples National Party and a militant trade unionist in the anti-colonial struggles of the 1930's and 40's, outlines the background to these events. The *Race Today* Collective do not share Hart's perspective and interpretations on these recent developments in Jamaican politics.

In February 1972, after a decade in opposition, the Peoples National Party (PNP), returned to office in Jamaica. In the election campaign, several factors had combined to favour the PNP.

For ten years, the governments formed by the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), had failed to control the soaring cost of living or reduce the chronically high level of unemployment.

The new PNP leader, Michael Manley, is a brilliant speaker with a magnetic personality who brought to his political task years of experience as a trade union leader. By projecting once more the PNP's socialist label, which the former party leadership had in recent years all but abandoned, Michael Manley brought new hope and inspiration to the Party's hitherto despondent and apathetic working class supporters.

The JLP leadership had also suffered a set back higher up the social scale. Corruption scandals, in which several government ministers had been involved, were seen by representatives of big business, foreign and local, as having dangerously eroded popular respect for authority. Though these elements had, in the majority, traditionally supported the JLP and had no fault to find with its leaders' policies, they nevertheless desired, in the interests of social stability, to see respect for authority restored. The best way to do this appeared to be to replace notoriously corrupt JLP politicians by a new and untainted political leadership. This change of allegiance by a number of influential representatives of the imperialists, the big local bourgeoisie and the conservative upper middle class may not have been particularly flattering to Michael Manley, indicating, as it did, that they did not take his socialist rhetoric very seriously. But it did provide the PNP with the funds to conduct the most lavishly financed election campaign in its history.

What manner of man is Michael Manley and what is the nature of the government of which he is the unchallengeable leader? Of professional middle class origins, he is not a wealthy man. So far as the writer is aware, he is neither a large landowner nor a large share-holder in any significant financial or commercial enterprise. But although he would appear to have no personal stake in the preservation of the capitalist system, neither is he a working class representative. It is, of course, possible for a person of middle class origins to become (after the manner of a Fidel Castro) a partisan in the workers' struggle for the abolition of capitalism. But a careful reading of Michael Manley's book *The Politics of Change* (Andre Deutsch, London, 1974) confirms that he is not committed to the abolition of capitalism. The most charitable construction that could be put on his ideas about economics is, that should a socialist

system become inevitable, at some future time, he would not be unalterably opposed to it. Meanwhile, he will borrow one or two socialist ideas.

Using the words descriptively and not as a term of abuse or disparagement, the writer characterises Michael Manley as a petty bourgeois politician *par excellence*, sharply to be distinguished from the average middle class politician who can be easily bought by the bourgeoisie. The writer sees him as endeavouring to play the role of leader of all sections of the nation, attempting, or appearing, to make concessions to both sides, to be all things to both capitalists and workers.

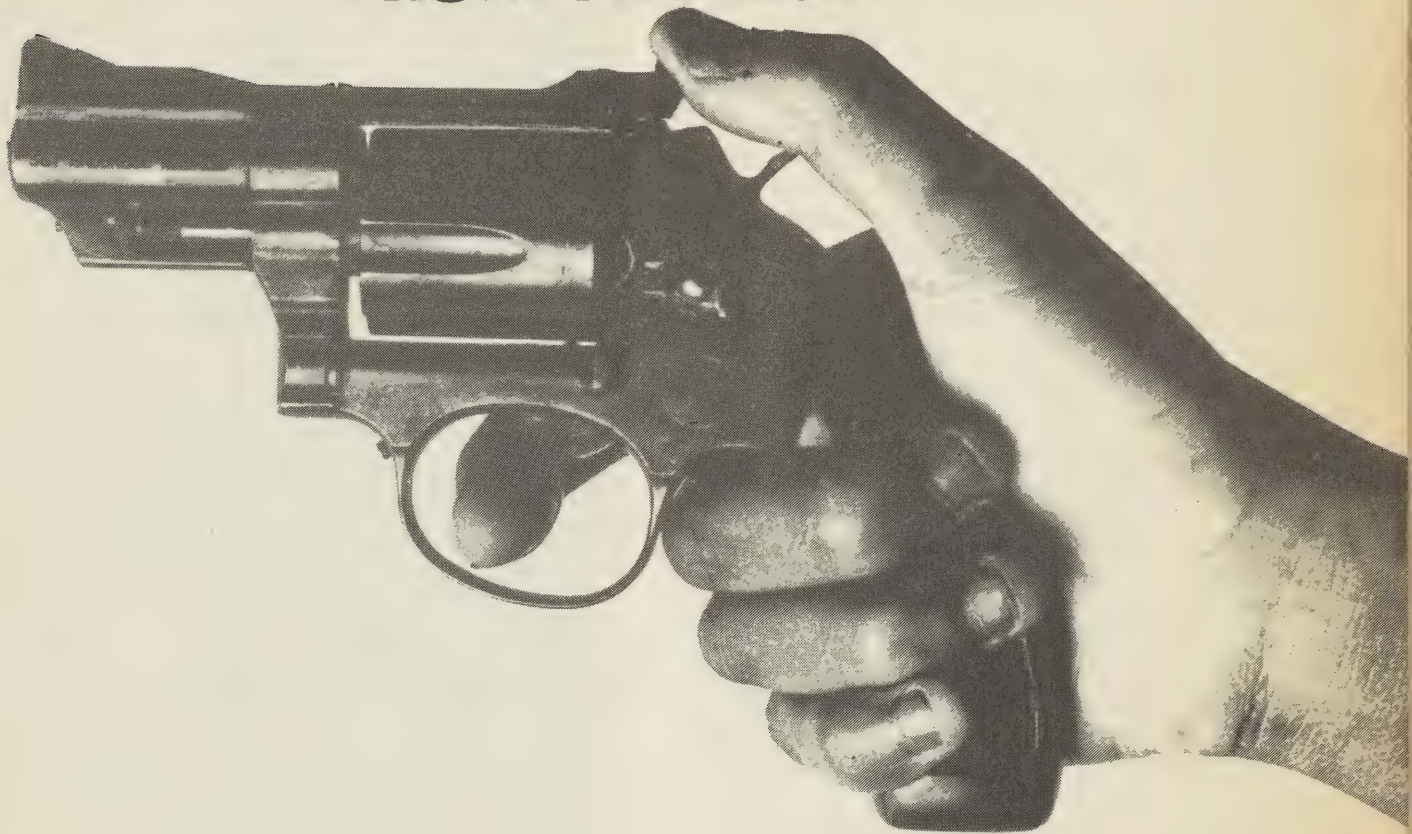
Like most politicians, he can be influenced by the possibility of gaining or losing support from one class or the other. But this is not to say that he has neither ideals nor principles of his own. He is in practice dedicated to achieving independence from the external and internal forces which, in the past, have paralysed the ability of Jamaican politicians to pursue policies of their own devising. Only by appreciating this, is it possible to understand his courageous attitude on external relations and some of his internal policies also.

Faithfully reflecting the Prime Minister's desire to retain the allegiance of all classes, the government's policies have been a curious mixture. Space does not permit us to examine the (regime's) whole programme, nor to endeavour to strike a trial balance between those policies which are progressive and those which are retrograde. The only policies with which we are here concerned are those, for the most part, progressive policies which have alarmed the imperialist and the local big bourgeoisie to the extent that, acting in alliance with other conservative elements, they are now engaged in such a determined effort to reverse them.

The issue which has aroused more opposition from the reactionaries than any other has been the Prime Minister's policy on external relations. Previous governments, whether of the PNP or the JLP, had been content to keep Jamaica's diplomatic and trade contacts at a level not far in excess of that established in colonial days, and to accept directions on foreign policy from the government of the USA. Appreciating the extent to which the absence of a wide network of external relations increased Jamaica's dependence on the USA and inhibited his freedom of action, Michael Manley set about establishing diplomatic and trade relations with as many countries as possible. The most sensitive area in which he applied this new policy was in his relations with the socialist countries and, in particular, with Jamaica's nearest neighbour, Cuba. Establishing relations with Cuba meant defying the wishes of the US Government to keep Cuba in isolation. But, act-



# JAMAICA A CHALLENGE FROM THE RIGHT



ing jointly with the Prime Ministers of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, this is what the Prime Minister of Jamaica proceeded to do, whereafter economic and political relations developed apace.

The significance of the new relationship between Cuba and Jamaica is far reaching. Not only have the wishes of the US Government been defied, but one of the principal props of the anti-communist propaganda campaign has been knocked away. As more and more Jamaicans have become aware of the relative prosperity enjoyed by the workers of Cuba, including the small farmers in the mountains; as more and more of the urban unemployed have appreciated the fact that the unemployment problem has been solved in Cuba; as more and more teachers, students and senior pupils appreciate the remarkable educational opportunities available to Cuban youth; as more and more religious congregations learn that religion has not been suppressed and religious worshippers are not persecuted, so the effectiveness of the principal ideological weapon of assorted reactionaries and the reactionary media has inevitably declined.

Parallel with his revival of the PNP's socialist image, Michael Manley also set about restoring most of the civil liberties which had been consistently suppressed and violated under previous PNP and

JLP regimes. The policy of denying passports to known leftists has ended. The bans which had been imposed on a variety of communist and other anti-imperialist publications has been lifted and the raids on homes and offices to search for banned publications have ceased. The practice of the so-called Security Police of visiting the employers and landlords of members of left wing organisations to "suggest" the termination of their employment or tenancies, as the case may be, has been discontinued. This new liberal policy obviously did not create the tremendous thirst which now exists in Jamaica for information about such matters as the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa and Asia, life in the socialist countries and Marxist-Leninist theory, but it has certainly made it easier and less perilous for persons to satisfy that thirst. Indeed, so many small leftist organisations and publications, all claiming to be revolutionary, have mushroomed in the last few years that a situation of considerable ideological confusion has resulted.

The trade union field is still dominated by the two major blanket organisations affiliated respectively to the two major political parties. But the government does now permit the independent trade unions to contest for representational rights with the major unions through the Ministry of Labour's poll-taking machinery. This right has, in the past, been denied



to so-called "communist led unions" by former JLP and PNP governments. This has resulted in an expansion of both the new, membership-controlled, unions under left leadership such as the University and Allied Workers Union, and also the old style independent union known as the TUC. The Prime Minister's conception of "worker participation in decision making", though positive, leaves much to be desired in the way it has so far been implemented. (This was discussed in the writer's review of Michael Manley's second book, *A Voice at the Work Place* Andre Deutsch, London, 1975, in *Race Today* February 1976. But it does represent an advance on previous government attitudes.

The government's attitude to industrial relations deserves consideration, since this is an area in which the petty bourgeois character of his political approach has been very clearly illustrated. As originally conceived, the Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes bill was designed primarily as a concession to the employers. The Act contains provisions whereby "industrial action" in a widely defined range of "essential services", and also in any dispute which might be "gravely injurious to the national interest", can become illegal. Persons participating in industrial action, when the machinery for making such action illegal has been invoked, become liable to substantial fines (as may their unions) and to imprisonment on a prescribed form of writ of attachment if they fail to pay. But although this legislation was meant to pacify the employers, it was dressed up to appear and was represented to be a kind of workers charter, by virtue of the provisions it contained for compulsory recognition of trade unions, re-instatement for wrongful dismissal and penalties for illegal lockouts. Presumably, acting on the assumption that it is easier to hoodwink workers than hard-headed businessmen, the government hoped to persuade both sides that their respective interests were being served.

The reaction of the employers' organisations was interesting. When the legislation was first proposed, they were delighted and co-operative. They were quite prepared to accept the provisions for compulsory trade union recognition though they haggled a bit about the proposal that a wrongfully dismissed worker should be entitled to re-instatement. They argued that the employer should have the alternative of paying compensation. The processing of the legislation, however, took a long time and in the meanwhile the employers' dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister's policies generally had been mounting. Their attitude on the clauses of the Bill began to stiffen and they attacked the clauses which appeared to extend trade union rights and the minor concessions which the Prime Minister was proposing to make to quieten working class protests. By the time the legislative process was nearing completion, the employers' organisations were in full-throated opposition and walked out of further discussions.

Another subject to which the government has paid particular attention is the expansion of free secondary education. This has required the creation of new secondary schools and the introduction of additional classes for older children at a number of existing schools, not formerly providing secondary educa-

The Sunday Gleaner, February 27, 1972

## THE ROD OF CORRECTION-V



Here it is on Triumphant display at Coronation Market on Thursday and has never been out of my possession one day — Nor will it ever be

**Jamaicans will not  
senseless and Deceit  
of Desperate Politicians  
THE PNP WARNED YOU  
MORE LIES ARE YET**



# THE STICK OF DECEPTION

# Seaga's stick is not Mashua's Rod!



Seaga's stick is a childish trick

It is the type of stick that is commonly used in Jamaica by people who cannot help themselves. The "Rod" is made of carved African Ebony, with an Ivory Handle and an Ivory Tip. It has metal clasps at the handle and tip.

# fooled again by the ul political trickery MS.

# THE PNP TOLD YOU. O COME. BEWARE! me for a change now!

# ter must come

# OTE PNP



tion. But it has also required new arrangements for the admission of pupils to existing secondary schools which have always been supported by government grants. Whilst the desirability of expanding free secondary education has been generally acknowledged, there has been some resentment at the widened intake of pupils into the old established secondary schools among sections of the upper-middle and sub-divisions of the middle class, who regarded secondary education as a class privilege which they would wish to retain.

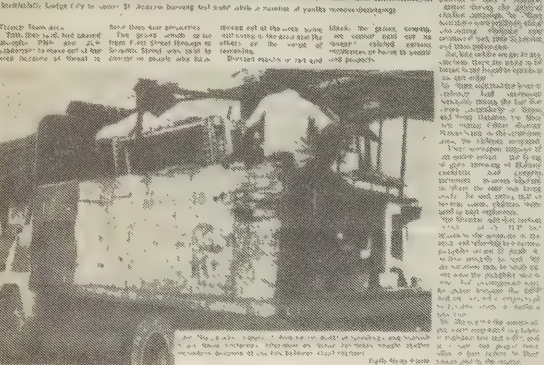
The government's nationalisation policies are very limited. The island's electricity services and the capital's omnibus services have been taken over into public ownership and other public utilities are on the list of intentions. The Government is also pursuing a policy of acquiring substantial shareholdings in basic industries, thereby becoming a partner in profit-making industry and substituting state capitalism for socialism. But even so, the policy does not meet with the general approval of foreign and local financial interests, except in those cases where needed capital is not available from private sources. The government has also intervened in the marketing of Jamaica's major exports. All sugar exports are now marketed by the government. The government has also been actively looking for new outlets for bauxite and alumina and to this end has been examining possibilities in Algeria and Hungary. What the government's marketing powers are in relation to the multinational bauxite companies and whether the latter are willing or unwilling parties to the process is not known to the writer. The government has, however, imposed a compulsory taxation levy on the bauxite industry which an attempt is being made to resist through the courts.

There are a number of other areas in which the Prime Minister's policies have offended sections of the bourgeoisie. One such area, in which a section of the merchants were antagonised, was in relation to the importation of certain foods — rice, flour, cornmeal and salt-fish. In respect of the importation of these items a government monopoly was established, the idea being that by regulating wholesale profit margins in these essential items, unnecessary price rises could be avoided. Another area has been the support given to the sugar workers co-operatives in their bid to take over the sugar estate lands for co-operative cultivation. What had happened there was that the sugar manufacturers had found that the farming side of their operations was the least profitable. Desiring to obtain capital for more profitable investment, they had sold their estate lands at a handsome profit to the previous JLP Government. The JLP regime had intended to re-sell or lease these lands to large cane farmers in large parcels of up to 300 acres or more, but before they could do so there was a change of government. The Sugar Workers Co-operative Council then approached Michael Manley direct with their proposal that the leases should be given to those who had formerly worked the land as employees. The government agreed, despite the opposition of the big cane farmers and the officials of the major unions, who did not wish to lose members and the dues compulsorily deducted



# TRENCH TOWN BURNS

Trench Town burned last night by arsonists, leaving a trail of destruction in the heart of the capital. The fire started in a small building and spread rapidly, consuming several other structures. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.



Fire in Trench Town, Jamaica, last night.

## 'Yap Fighters' arrested

BY NEW JERSEY

The arrested Yap fighters were taken to the New Jersey State Prison. They were arrested on charges of armed robbery and possession of firearms. The police said they were part of a larger operation to bring down the Yap fighting force.

## Street warfare in Trench Town

# GUNS BLAZE AGAIN

Police and gunmen engaged in a gun battle in Trench Town, leaving several people injured and property damaged.

The gun battle broke out in the early morning hours of Tuesday. Police officers were patrolling the area when they were ambushed by a group of gunmen. A fierce exchange of gunfire followed, with several police officers wounded. The gunmen fled the scene, leaving behind a trail of destruction.



A group of people in Trench Town, Jamaica.

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from their pay packets. These sugar workers' co-operatives, incidentally, are a model example of workers' control of their own organisations which the trade unions would do well to emulate.

Though the policies pursued by Michael Manley cannot be described as revolutionary, many of them have nevertheless been sufficiently progressive, sufficiently defiant of the wishes of the US imperialists, sufficiently disturbing to the big foreign and local employers and the conservative upper middle class, to have caused a coalescence of reactionary forces to oppose them. Though some of these policies are disliked by some of the more conservative ministers in the cabinet and by right wingers among the party's supporters, so strong is the popular support for Michael Manley, both inside and outside the party membership, that he has had little difficulty in securing cabinet approval for them.

After four years of his premiership, the reactionary forces have therefore now decided that rather more drastic measures than usual are required to reverse the present trend. This has been the background to the recent events in Jamaica.

## ORGANISED VIOLENCE

On January 6, 1976, while a conference of the International Monetary Fund, attended by foreign dignitaries and a host of reporters from the world's press, was in progress at a hotel not far away, a spate of arson and shooting erupted in the capital. Plans for the disturbances had been well laid and were carried out with professional precision. In a poor working class residential section of the city, where the residents had voted overwhelmingly for the Peoples National Party in the 1972 elections, ramshackle tenement buildings were simultaneously set on fire. Gunmen firing automatic weapons from

street barricades, with the assistance of hastily gathered members of the opposition JLP, prevented fire engines and the police from approaching the fires.

In another area, where earlier that day there had been a combined demonstration by PNP supporters and members of the left wing organisations against the racist policies of the South African Government and the presence of the South African representative at the IMF conference, gunmen shot two constables guarding the United States Visa Office, killing one and fatally wounding the other. A Jamaican employee of the US embassy was also injured.

In a broadcast made on the following day the Prime Minister said:

"The Security Forces are satisfied that there are now hired gunmen who are well paid. They receive their guns from people with a pernicious intent who organise them. . . The men who are doing these things obviously have access to large amounts of money to equip and pay these gunmen."

Manley said further:

"We are satisfied that the same people who planned the kind of organised gunmanship which led to the killing of the Police at Hunts Bay are the same people who burnt down homes in Trench Town, are the same people who organised the murder of the policeman at the American Visa Office. All of this is calculated to create the impression that Jamaica has now become a society where the law no longer exists."

Immediately following this eruption of arson and shooting, as if in pursuance of a pre-arranged programme, alarmist articles began to appear in the American press, including the influential financial paper, the *Wall Street Journal*. US travel agents



received, through the post, leaflets suggesting that in view of the unstable situation in Jamaica it would be prudent to advise their customers against going there. Wholesale cancellations of reservations at north coast hotels followed, where the annual tourist season, which brings in much of the island's foreign currency, had already started. The message was clear — Jamaica is unsafe, both for holidays and investments.

Even before these events, the level of unemployment, always high, had been getting higher due to closures and production cut-backs in the bauxite-alumina industry. This may have been a natural part of the capitalist world's economic crisis but, equally possibly, it is part of a contrived strategy. The fact that bauxite production by associated companies in Australia is said to be rising, is at least cause for suspicion. But whether or not developments in the bauxite-alumina industry are part of the package, there is no doubting the fact that a carefully laid plan to create economic dislocation has been unfolding, designed to cause distress, dissatisfaction, fear and uncertainty.

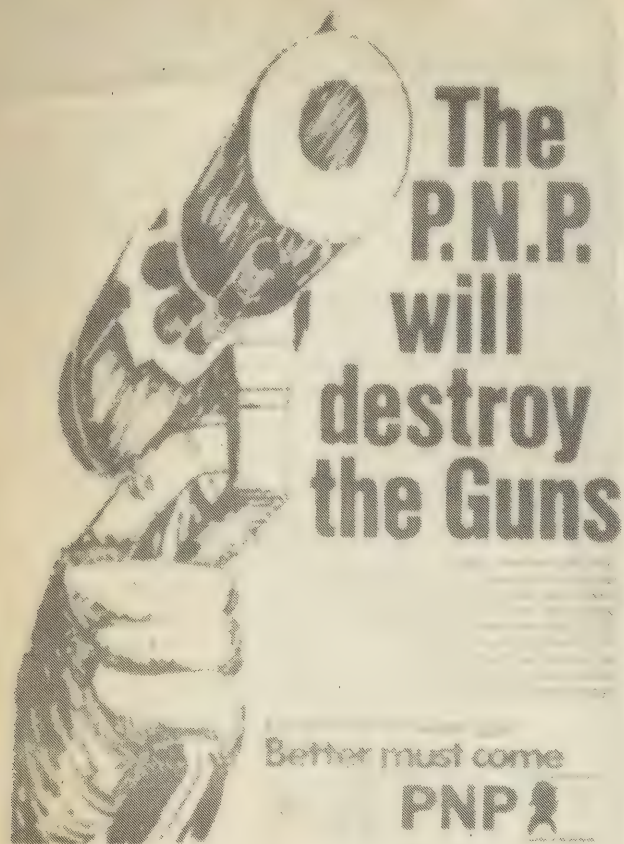
Simultaneously, there has been the expected intensification of the anti-communist propaganda campaign. The *Daily Gleaner's* reactionary columnists and commentators over Radio Jamaica have spear-headed the attack, while leaflets have been distributed throughout the island attacking the government.

More serious than the attempt to dislocate the economy has been the effect that recent events have had on the prospects of working class unity. Working class pressure had, in recent years and with increasing frequency, been forcing the two major unions to act jointly on issues affecting wages and working conditions. The recent attacks on the homes and persons of PNP working class supporters has naturally provoked a number of vigorous, if relatively less well armed, reprisals against JLP working class supporters. The inevitable result has been an increased political polarisation of the working class and a set back to the prospects of unity in action in the immediate future. This, of course, has delighted the bourgeoisie, but they should not count their chickens too soon. Parallel with this polarisation, it is

*Funeral of PNP gunman, Scarface, murdered by JLP gang in the 1940's.*





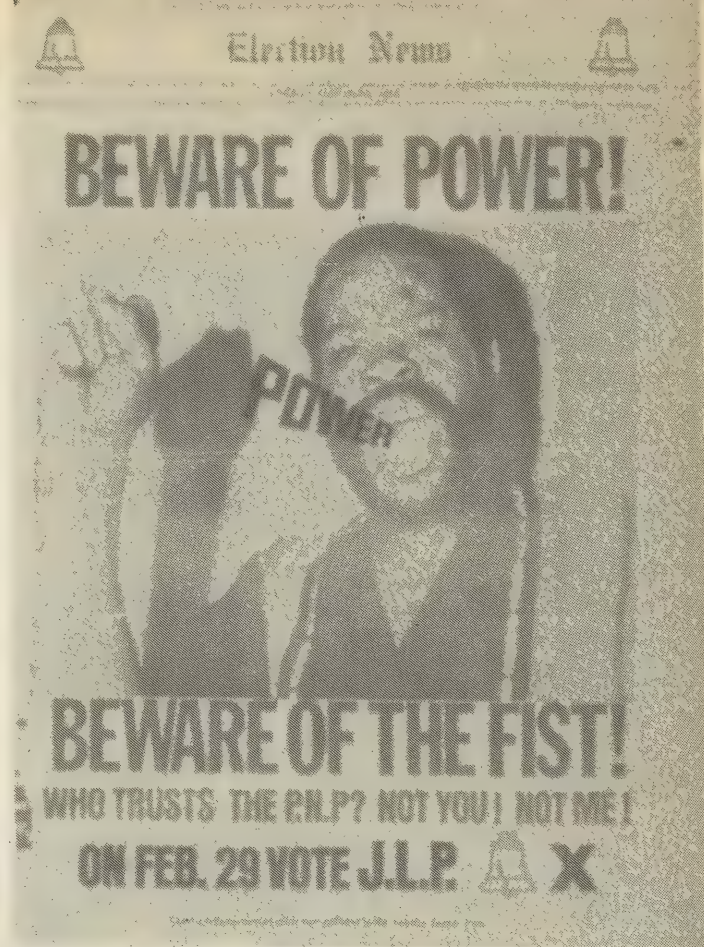


safe to predict that among the more advanced workers, particularly the working youth as distinct from the 'lumpen' elements, an increased awareness will develop of the futility of "black workers killing black workers" to serve the ends of others.

## POLITICAL OPTIONS

One of the options open to the reactionaries was to create a situation in which the Prime Minister would be sufficiently intimidated to himself give the signal for a retreat. In their pursuit of this option, the conspirators have enjoyed the active support of some of the more conservative elements within the PNP. The most prominent of these, though not the most effective, is the island's conservative Governor General, Florizel Glasspole. Throwing the protocols usually associated with his office out of the window, he has been making provocative political speeches. The reactionaries also have their men in the cabinet. Perhaps the most conservative minister was Allan Isaacs, Minister of Mining and Natural Resources (not to be confused with the equally conservative Wills O. Isaacs who is now the ambassador in Ottawa). Allan Isaacs is an old right winger who first showed his potential for disloyalty to the party as long ago as the late 1940's, when he entered into an alliance with the former head of Tate and Lyle in Jamaica in the launching of a Farmers Union and a Farmers Party.

From Allan Isaacs' ministry, confidential cabinet papers were 'leaked' to the opposition JLP leader in



December of last year, and used by the latter to illustrate his contention that the Prime Minister had brought the country to insolvency. When asked to tender his resignation Isaacs resigned not only his ministry but also his party membership. The media gave the fullest publicity to his allegations that the Prime Minister was intent on bringing "Cuban style communism" to Jamaica. The Allan Isaacs affair was something of a test case. The reactionaries had hoped that his resignation in the third week of January, so soon after the disorders above described, would inspire other conservative members of the Government to speak up against the Prime Minister's policies, thereby forcing him to move back to a closer political alignment with the USA. In the event, however, the Isaacs issue had the opposite effect. So great was the anger of the party rank and file and so suspicious were they that there might be other ministers ready to do the same sort of thing, that for their own safety other ministers suspected of conservatism had to denounce Isaacs. This enabled Michael Manley to exact declarations of loyalty from all of them. The upshot has been an apparent closing of the ranks and unanimous approval of a decision to proceed as planned with the arrangements for the forthcoming visit to Jamaica of Fidel Castro.

It is interesting to observe, however, that the Prime Minister has made a concession to the conservative elements in his parliamentary party. In deference to their wishes, he has agreed that the militant and left leaning youth section of the party should be required to refrain from further joint participation with the Workers Liberation, the



Jamaica Communist Party and other Marxist-Leninist organisations on demonstrations and other joint projects. Whether this should be interpreted as a wavering of determination or a tactical ploy remains to be seen.

Starting from a position in which the reactionaries had a variety of options open to them, it is now apparent that their available alternatives are narrowing. They failed in their first objective which was to "persuade" the Prime Minister to abandon his progressive course, particularly in the field of external relations. They have also failed in their second and related alternative which was to bring about an open split in the government and undermine, with the assistance of the Governor General and the more conservative members of the cabinet, the Prime Minister's capacity to pursue his present course. They have therefore now been forced to their second range of alternatives — the various ways in which they may hope to achieve the removal of Michael Manley and his most progressive and loyal supporters from office.

The writer's most recent information from Jam-

*Richard Hart, political activist in the 1930's and 40's.*



aica leaves him in little doubt that, acting within their second range of alternatives, the reactionaries will first employ the option of endeavouring to defeat the PNP in the general elections which must take place by February 1977 at the latest. They will now direct their main efforts towards the achievement of an electoral victory for the JLP. They will, almost certainly, seek to organise further outbreaks of shooting and arson. But these will be directed to the ends of intimidating the PNP supporters and creating administrative and economic chaos, not in the immediate future to the seizure of power by force. This is not to say, however, that there is no possibility of their passing over to another alternative option before the elections take place, if it becomes apparent during the course of the election campaign that the JLP has no hope of victory.

If the reactionaries fail in their attempt to reinstate the JLP in office at the next elections, or realise before the elections that such a prospect is hopeless, they will be forced back finally to considering the adoption of one of the possible methods of removing Michael Manley from office by force. In this, as at the present time, they will no doubt be advised and assisted by the American CIA. The possibilities range from an attempt at the individual assassination of the Prime Minister to an attempt to bring off an armed coup. The JLP does not enjoy that overwhelming popular support which would be necessary for a successful civilian coup. The reactionaries would therefore have to repose their hopes in the armed forces or perhaps a section of the armed forces.

Whether a reactionary coup could be successfully organised in the armed forces is sheer speculation. On achieving independence, Jamaica inherited intact a police force and an army which had been part of the colonial power's repressive machinery. The armed forces have no tradition of participation in a struggle for freedom. The British tradition of a non-political army and police, serving the elected government of the day, may still have some residual influence. But ten years have elapsed since independence and much has happened in the outside world and in Jamaica too. No one really knows what the outcome of such an adventure by the reactionaries would be.

To summarise the situation: the reactionaries would appear to have lost much ground and to have become more desperate; the people, on the other hand, have been gaining in confidence. The government is progressive but not revolutionary. It has nevertheless, in the Jamaican context, facilitated a significant popular advance during its short term in office. The prospect of its adherence to a progressive course is however still disproportionately dependent on the survival of the present Prime Minister. In the present situation it is vitally necessary for the workers to be unceasingly vigilant to counteract the pressure on the government from the more conservative elements, both within the ruling party and in the society as a whole.

The way forward for the workers is the same as always — organisation, education and preparation.



## MOVING WHERE AND WITH WHOM?

On November 5th, bonfire night, the black youth in Chapeltown Leeds, mounted a series of running battles against the local police. (See *Race Today* December 1975).

This unannounced intervention had the effect of throwing the ruling forces in Leeds into disarray. The rebellion also had the effect of bringing to the surface differing methods of organisational approach and political views among activists in the community.

Below, we publish two contributions reflecting some of the differences to surface in the last few months. It is clear that the issues raised here are not particular to Chapeltown Leeds, but a preoccupation of activists in black communities throughout Britain.

*Dear Race Today,*

In response to the backlash, 'Whites and Bonfire Night' in January *Race Today*, I would like to ask of the Chapeltown News Collective, 'What do you hope to gain by interfering in black people's lives?'

A large number of black people of Caribbean and African descent are concentrated in and around the area known as Chapeltown in Leeds. Many of them have lived in the area for well over a quarter of a century. Most of them have suffered under the oppressive hands of the establishment at some time or other.

Many white working class youth and adults live in Chapeltown also. They too have adopted the same racist attitudes towards the black community and generally hold us responsible for the bad housing, poor schools, prostitution and crime committed in the area.

The events of Bonfire Night resulted in the arrest of eleven West Indian youth who were charged with offences against the police. Support for the action of the youth has been demonstrated and will continue.

It is difficult to determine the legitimate role of white activists 'well rooted' in Chapeltown. The Chapeltown News Collective, one such group in a recent editorial printed in their paper concerning the Bonfire Night incident said, 'We believe that the youth must be central to the new organisation that is able to generalise their struggle.' The Chapel-

town News Collective is an all white leftist group of opportunists who do not encourage blacks, youth or otherwise to participate in their activities. Yet they deny being racists. Their members are of middle class origin, ex-college and university graduates, who through their own decision choose to live in Chapeltown amongst black people. Their role in the community may not be evident, but their expectations of blacks (like so many of the whites who teach our children in the E.P.S. schools in Chapeltown) are exceptionally low. They have been quoted as saying that blacks in the community are not capable of managing their own affairs, never mind organising themselves into politically motivated groups. Therefore, it is necessary for educated white liberals to look after black people's affairs for them.

In Chapeltown, the black community no longer has a voice of its own, if indeed it ever had one. White activists in the area now claim to be the voice of the sufferers in the community. And the sufferers do not have to be consulted before speaking on their behalf.

Black groups in Chapeltown face attack from two specific sides. Firstly, they have to deal with the racist forces which threaten the everyday existence of black people in the community and secondly, the attempts made by white liberal 'do gooders' to further deceive and confuse the black community.

Our historical experience has still not taught us, particularly those of us in Chapeltown, how to detect the 'wolf in sheep clothing.' Whatever information we give out to these activists concerning the community must not in any way endanger lives. Instead, what we should be asking them is this, 'How are you going to use the information you have compiled concerning us, and who gives you the right to work on our behalf?'

Icilma Browne.

Chapeltown, Leeds.

*Dear Race Today,*

The Chapeltown News Collective would like to correct some of Icilma Browne's allegations in her letter, and to discuss some of the general issues raised.

Chapeltown News, the only community newspaper in the Leeds 7 area, is described as "all white. . . middle class. . . ex-college and university..." It is true that the people who type, letraset and paste-up the newspaper are often all white. But there would be nothing to put in the paper were it not for the many black (and white) working men and women who come to us with stories. Nor would we sell 1,000 copies each month (to around 6,000 families) if we were not reasonably well rooted in the area. Some of us have had higher education, but a number have not.



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLAS

Icilma Browne says we "do not encourage blacks to participate in (our) activities." This is nonsense. Some black people have been actively involved with the paper, and we regretted their departure (usually through pressure of other commitments). The paper's first editor was black. We respect the right of black people to organise on their own, so we have never assumed that black militants would "join" us. Instead, we have simply asked black people to contribute to the paper, and to discuss issues with us. If any have seemed interested in a closer association, we have tried to encourage that, while trying to avoid the sterile "recruitment" relationship many white left groups have with black people. Our regular monthly meetings are advertised in the paper, and letters have several times been written to all black organisations in the area in an effort to form a representative management group for the paper, but with little response.

Recently (and incidentally before Icilma Browne wrote to *Race Today*) letters were sent to all black organisations in Chapletown stating that the present group involved with the paper feels that its "all-white" composition, when the paper relates mainly to the black community, is clearly wrong, and is also giving rise to understandable suspicion. We ask for the organisations to redefine the newspaper and state on what terms they would like to see it run and who could commit themselves to regular involvement. If this effort at affecting a change fails, we shall seriously have to decide whether publication of the paper as it stands at present should cease altogether.

We do not know who is meant to have said that black people are not capable of running their own affairs: if this idiot exists he merits the same fate as Guy Fawkes.

It is no surprise, however, that this rumour has been put about. Nor is it any surprise that senior Leeds councillors are saying that black youth ripped out the tongue of one of the injured policemen on Bonfire Night. Both rumours are totally false, and both are put about by people who are trying to preserve their own power and to stop organisation for change developing in Chapletown.

Icilma Browne seems confused about whether we are "leftists" or "educated white liberals" or "dogooders". We are leftists, or socialists. Some of us identify with *Race Today's* point of view. We dissociate ourselves from the 'liberals' who are rightly criticised for their patronising and deceptive role.

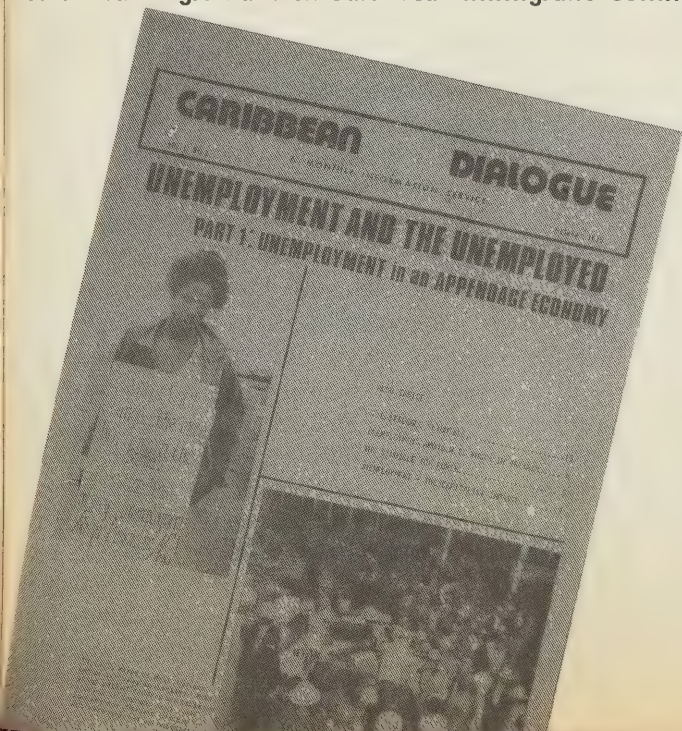
The whole response to the Bonfire Night protest by Chapeltown Youth, and to the issue of black and white involvement in the community is getting a little confusing. Surely support for the youth is the most urgent thing, and far too important to become sidetracked into personality politics. Secondly, if there are problems of communication or interference between sections of the community in Chapeltown or elsewhere, these should preferably be sorted out in person rather than on the pages of a newspaper. We shall ourselves be writing to Icilma Browne in the hope of meeting her personally to discuss things.

In conclusion, we categorically state that we do not believe that white people of whatever political complexion should interfere in black peoples' affairs. Our role is to give support on what radical terms black people themselves lay down in struggles, such as the events of Bonfire Night. These terms should be made specific so that as much practical and unified help can be given to the youth *as soon as possible*.

Chapeltown News Collective.

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# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLAS

## BLACK PARLIAMENT

*Dear Race Today,*

In the March issue of your journal, you published a story, under the heading: "Black Parliament Fiasco", which made certain misleading references to the "Black People in Britain: The Way Forward" conference held on 17/19 January 1975, and subsequent activities of the Post Conference Constituent Committee (PCCC).

We would appreciate it if you allow us space to state the facts. These quite simply are:

1. The PCCC was appointed by the January 1975 conference to implement certain resolutions passed at the conference, the main ones being to take steps towards the creation of a National Black Peoples Organisation, and to open up channels of communication with the Home Secretary through which grass-roots organisations could communicate views on the White Paper, and later, the Bill on Racial Discrimination.
2. PCCC was required by the conference to refer back to the grass-roots at each major step in the implementation of their remit. This they have done through a series of mailings to some 750 organisations; regional conferences at which, inter alia, views were obtained

on a draft constitution; the recent appointment of two full-time officers to establish even closer links with the grass-roots so as to ensure a representative residential conference at Birmingham on July 17/18.

3. It is a well known fact (not a "secret deal") that the Gulbenkian Foundation has provided most of the funds for the PCCC expenses, the regional consultations, and the national conference in July, as well as a launching grant for the new organisation. Great importance is attached to the need for a contribution from the black community themselves, both towards the run-up costs and the expenses of the national body once established.

The January 1975 Conference was unanimous about the need for a representative national black peoples organisation — a National Council of Afro, Asian and Caribbean Peoples. PCCC, in consultation with the grass-roots, have created in the Birmingham Conference this July the opportunity for this to come into being. It is now up to organisations from all black ethnic minority communities to take advantage of this opportunity by sending representatives to the Conference to elect the best possible people to serve as officers and committee-members of the new body; and through active participation in fund-raising.

*Race Today's* support in the realisation of these objectives would be greatly appreciated.

Jocelyn Barrow,  
Chairperson,  
Post Conference Constituent Committee

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# REVIEWS

## INTERNATIONAL REGGAE

Toots and the Maytals and the Heptones at the Lyceum, Strand. 10th March, 1976.

We have now arrived at a stage in the process of the development of Jamaican music, where two types of music are produced—the one for the home market, and the other for the international market. The results of this development have been, on the positive side; a general improvement in the recording, processing and packaging of the music; on the negative side, the essential character of the music has been compromised in order to sell the music on the international market.

In 1975, the pressure got hot and the leading reggae producers, Trojan, got drop an crash. So in step Marcel Rod with him big money bag and Saga Records, previously dealing in classics, to reap of the reggae harvest. After that the flag was down and everyone was on the go. Bob Marley and the Wailers, after a successful international tour, were proclaimed king of reggae. 'White' record shops began to stock 'reggae' and the pop press followed with features and reviews on reggae. Older Jamaican phonograph records suddenly became collectors' items. New companies like Fay Music, Atra, and Vulcan were set up. Island Records signed up the Burning Spear, The Heptones and Toots and the Maytals. Virgin Records, previously dealing in rock music, signed up the Mighty Diamonds, U Roy and Peter Tosh. Yea, the flag was down and they were all on the go.

It is in this context — the context of the internationalisation of Jamaican music — that Toots and the Maytals and the Heptones appeared at the Lyceum, Strand recently.

It was a crowded affair; in fact, it was rugged. I even hear/people who were there/mention that the numbers present equalled the attendance at the Wailers affair/of las' year.

Man and man and daughters were present but were outnumbered by the white rockers. And the trendies from suburbia, they came too in their thousands; kinda radical chic in a big way. And it was Toots and the Maytals, the top of the bill, they came to see. I would say they got their *moneys worth*, for it was for them that Toots and the Maytals came to play. They gave a very *neat, professional, entertaining performance*, with Toots steppin' and swaggerin', shufflin' and dippin', singing a churchial soun', chanting Rasta chant, chanting soul chant, shouting sounds like a Baptist shouter, at times, resonant of the immortal Otis Redding.

It was not my kinda music but it was good music.

The music of the backing group, an outstanding set of session men from down Jamaica way, was flawless both in terms of feel and technique -- it too was neat. . . professional.

And if 'King of Reggae' was a title Bob Marley inherited, then 'Inventor of Reggae' is the one they



Danny Da Costa

gave to Toots. The titles get more ridiculous every day. Whether Toots and the Maytals were the inventors of reggae or not, it was the Heptones, in my opinion, who carried the show. They were sugar, they were mellow, dem did deh-deh. Man called Léroy Sibbles, man called Barry Llewellyn and man called Earl Morgan — dem mash it up, mi a tell yu, wid di riddim section of the British based Undivided Band lettin riddim run all di way; Organ D, sipple, and drummer man, Jah Bunny comin on strong.

The Heptones had not come just to entertain, they also came to ground and communicate. It was



Danny Da Costa



an inspired performance and the inspiration came largely from the black section of the audience up front. The climax of their performance came with 'Book of Rules', a very beautiful and meaningful song with a country and western feel. The crowd, both black and white, roared for more and they had to sing it twice.

Toots came to entertain, funky-reggae style and 'reggae got soul' was what he had to say. The Heptones came to ground, rockers style. It was truly a night of 'international reggae'.

Linton Kwesi Johnson.

These artists are available on Island Records.

Their latest albums are:

Reggae Got Soul (ISLP 9374)

by Toots and the Maytals.

Night Food (ISLP 9387)

by the Heptones.

## MOVE YAAH!

Natty Cultural Dread

by Big Youth. Trojan Records PRLS 123.

Natty Cultural Dread is mostly 'natty lyrical sweet' and 'natty political' plain confused. In spite of the confusion, the album is an advance on *Dread Locks Dread*. The transformation of 'dub' from being a graft to becoming a tree, is complete. The essence of dub, or the parasitical root of it, living charmingly off fundamental reggae, off the language of the roots, off itself, is that it has something to "tell yah".

Manley Buchanan, alias Big Youth, has nothing new to say. Yet he says it again beautifully. The artist and the parrot are doomed to repeat themselves differently, so Youth singing Diana Ross' 'Touch Me In the Morning' brings to it a tormented isolation very different from Diana's fighting gentleness.

The album finds Youth edging away in scope and location from the Natty of the ghetto, towards a Natty with a cultural passport to all continents. No longer is he Marley's rebel from Trenchtown in Trenchtown. "Natty Dread inna England, Natty Dread inna 'Merica, Natty Dread inna Bronx. . ." and inna Brooklyn, Manhattan, Canada, Georgetown, Roseau. . . In all the 'ghost towns' of Babylon, sings Big Youth, celebrating his arrival.

The new Natty is not only confident at having gotten places. Through Big Youth, he expresses the urgency of his art and his mission. In the only strictly rasta hymn, reminiscent of Dadawah, the urgency of dread and its myths finds definition:

*Black people,  
We have been stripped and robbed  
Of our name, our language and our culture.  
We have even been robbed of our religion,  
Do we wonder will we really ever love again.*

The answering message of the chorus chant is:

*"Keep your dread  
Natty keep your culture.*

*Keep your dread  
Natty know your culture.  
Hold up your head  
Natty. . . keep your culture"*

So Youth's dread, his locks which are more taunting than worshipful, give him a name, a religion and, if not a culture, at least a language. The folk proverbs in the lyrics are more ponderous than in the earlier LP's:

*Hell is not for sinners  
Hell is for heroes, as I would say  
So if you want to be an hero  
Go to hell. . .'*

The simple wisdom becomes even simpler:

*The hills so low  
And you can't go under.*

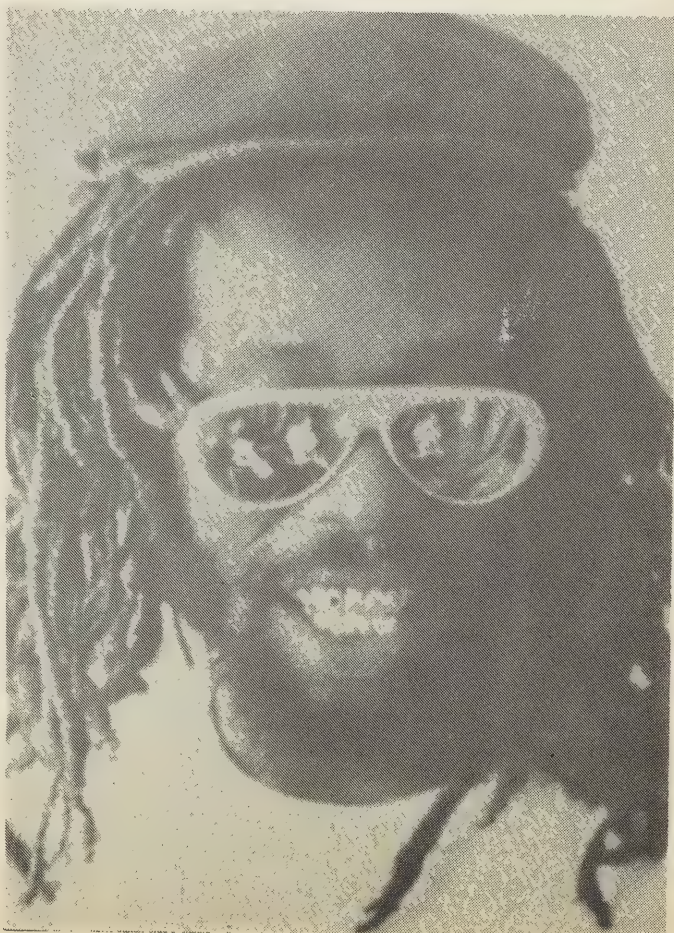
and the political content even more outrageously wishful, even if it is just symbolic:

*Make we kill Pope Paul  
And hold the Seventh Seal thereof  
Kill Pope Paul  
An-a-Babylon fall.*

and again:

*'Same old church and state  
Hypocritical system  
same old church and state  
Blow black people mind  
So they fool us all the time, as I would say.*

Youth is at his best when he's not singing his own religion, but combining, as he does in Jim Squashey, both observation and skank. He sees the 'Idrin screechin'



West Indian World.



*And my brothers dilly-dally  
Say they gone down the alley  
To hold and smoke up the kally. . .  
Me no deal with the folly, Idrin screechin . . .*

The vein of skank makes it difficult to decide when Youth is defying reverence and when he is defending it.

*Black people, never be ungrateful y'all  
The spit in the sky  
Fall in your eye  
What goes up must come down*

So also, one can't be sure when natty cultural has turned into catty natural:

*God ain't sleeping, God ain't dead, God  
ain't standing up at the Family Planning  
Clinic sweating to deliver birth,  
. . . They take tiny white pills to control their  
natural birth. . .*

#### Dem No Wort' E'

by Beverley East and Maureen McCorkle  
performed at Kingsway College.

There was entertainment coming from Kingsway College on Friday, March 12th, when the Black Students Society at the college put on, for the third year running, their cultural evening.

The evening commenced with a poetry reading, then followed limbo dancing, African drumming and the long awaited play, 'Dem No Wort E'

The play opens with the central character Bibs, a West Indian housewife who busies herself around the home as she waits for her man Reggie to get out of bed to have his breakfast. She turns and addresses the audience and says.

*"...Listen, mek I tell you. This is 1976... an' de  
cleanin' an' de washin' an' de cookin'... dem no  
wort e'..."*

The attitude is clear — the sacrifice, hard work and burden involved in looking after a man are not worth it. 'Dem no wort' e', writes Maureen McCorkle and Beverley East, both students at Kingsway.

Bibs lives in Constant Spring, Jamaica. She is a housewife who is dependent on her man Reggie for money. He goes out to work and gives what he feels like for the housekeeping.

The play is centered around the two characters, Bibs and Reggie. They live in a state of constant unease. Bibs can find no good in Reggie. She constantly attacks, cusses and demoralises him. Reggie puts up no real verbal resistance. He makes feeble attempts to oppose Bibs, knowing that whatever he says is in vain.

*"...listen Reggie, no mek me an' you ha' nuttin'..."  
... "dat 50 cents you lef' 'pon the bureau drawer,  
a ho dat a fe feed... It a nuttin'..."*

She gives him one burnt black dumpling for his dinner,

*"dat a wha' de 50 cents bring..."*

Reggie recovers his swagger when he is drinking, gambling and joking with male friends and with other young females. His latest is Thelma, a young hussy who is out for what she can get.

*John Coltrane died in vain of a Love  
Supreme*

In four of the songs, Youth turns the love supreme to pure boy/girl stuff, only his strained voice gives to the love songs something of the coarse attraction that (dare I say it) Dylan's voice brought to the borrowed songs of *Self Portrait*. Regrettably on this LP, the production of Tony Robinson and the backing of Skin Flesh and Bones is missing. Manley does it all himself and arranges the percussive guitars, melodians and fat-cat horns to punctuate the poetry. The effect is not as seductive as Tony Robinson's perfect matching and mixing of melodies. But then, only a minority of us want to be seduced by philosophy, though it is evident from *Natty Cultural Dread* that some of Youth's followers demand to be flattered by it.

Dread Fred.

Bibs responds to this by seeking to make herself attractive.

*"...Mek me go a Times Store, go buy a frok..."*

This fails, and in the final confrontation,

Reggie leaves Bibs for Thelma. Not for long. Thelma finds a younger man and leaves Reggie high and dry. He returns to Bibs and offers his hand in marriage. She accepts, and for the first time they display a tenderness for each other.

Miss Inez, the local gossip, is introduced around the central characters. She keeps Bibs well informed about the private lives of others in the neighbourhood. Listen to Miss Inez as she informs Bibs in one of her typical sessions:

*"You no Miss Lou, Mary Sue dauta, dung a de  
battam, well fe bar dauta a breed. De gal only  
14, you hear me..."*

And again:

*"Ah hear seh Reggie gaan, but you no me no  
business in a people affair. But ah hear im deb  
wid... an de gal lef im..."*

The audience of students, parents, teachers, employed and unemployed youth had no difficulty identifying with the characters, nor did the actors and actresses. Reggie, played by Clifton Morrison, gave the impression that he was so at ease with the West Indian male role that he could invent his own lines and movements to fit the character.

Fortunately, I happen to know Angela Wynter. She played the part of Miss Inez and a better casting of Miss Inez was not possible. Maureen McCorkle was superb in her role as Bibs. She was able to put across what she felt for Bibs, as she may have felt for her own mother, her aunt or herself.

These performances, particularly by the women actresses, reflect that there exists a struggle fought daily against the men both within and without the college. Were this not the case, I doubt whether the play would have been so successful.

Jean Ambrose  
Race Today Collective.



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# Race Today

VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN MAY 1976 25p

## THE STYLISTICS OF MILLWALL

DEFEND MANNINGHAM CARNIVAL AS USUAL





# LETTERS

*Dear Race Today*

In reply to your letter from Messrs Alain and Goddard in your April 1976 number appealing for information about immigrant teachers, I wonder whether the convenors of SIT are aware of the numerically strong multicultural Union of Teachers based in Ealing. If not, I should be pleased to put them in touch with the officers of the latter organisation.

A D Matthews  
Principal Assistant (Immigrants)  
Education Office,  
London Borough of Ealing.

*Dear Race Today,*

Thank you for the copy of *Race Today* you recently sent me — doubtless because this Council is marginally concerned with the arrangements for the Notting Hill Carnival — and which I have read with interest.

Perhaps you would allow me a comment or two.

I take it your objective is two-fold. Firstly, to promote racial harmony within the UK and secondly to crusade for racial fair-play throughout the community.

If this is so, your editorial policy seems to me to concentrate too heavily on the latter to the detriment of the former.

It is all struggle and fight and confrontation, no bad blacks, only bad whites! Your credibility and therefore your cause would be improved if the police

were not invariably represented as biased and brutal and if, occasionally, mention were made of the many examples of black youngsters being leniently and understandingly treated by the police and courts of this country.

Racial prejudice is not a one-way street!

One example to illustrate what I mean. Your account of Desmond Trotter mentions the murder of a "white" American tourist. Murder is murder. Guilt or innocence, blame or sympathy, justice and mercy are all relevant; colour is not. The stress on colour merely leaves the reader with the impression, which I am sure you would not wish to give, that if the victim had been black and the suspect white you would have been more concerned in the apprehension and punishment of the murderer and less certain that the suspect had been "framed".

I trust you will accept these comments in the spirit in which they are offered, which is intended to improve the objective balance of your editorial slant and make your paper a more credible advocate of your aims as I understand them.

Alderman P H Methuen  
Deputy Leader of the Council.  
London Borough of Kensington.

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## BLACKS PAY TAX FOR ROOFS WITH CRACKS

In Britain, it is generally accepted that the State has the responsibility to house and provide other services for the nation's workforce. These are not privileges handed down from above, but, in one sense, hard earned gains fought for and won by workers who battled, in most cases, against conditions of dire poverty.

Always, successive governments, once they were forced to accept these responsibilities, have tended to provide these services on the cheap and where they are able to get away with it, not provide them at all.

They have enlisted and will continue so to enlist the leaders of workers' organisations to validate the cry that the State cannot afford the costs of housing the workers. They will provide for the strongest and ignore the weaker sections. They will enlist the media to call forward those who labour to make all the sacrifices in the national interest. They will attempt to invoke a sense of guilt among those who ask for more.

In short, they will lie, dodge, manipulate and cheat in order to escape what is now a fundamental responsibility.

The black community of Britain has spent no time in calculating the cost to itself of the wage restraint imposed today by the Labour Movement on the working class, or of the cuts in social spending which that same movement has countersigned. The state has the responsibility, well established in British law, but not in practice, for housing workers' families. In the East End of London, as *Race Today* has repeatedly pointed out over the last two years, the state has disregarded and shrugged off that responsibility.

The Bengali Housing Action Group, whose article we carry on pg. 104, is representative of the thousands of Bangla Deshi workers and their dependants who live in the East End. For years most of them have been working in the sweat shops of the East End and living in the most abysmal housing imaginable. The housing list is packed with their names, but the procedures for allocating houses used by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets have managed to keep the majority of them from getting Council housing. Neither is it possible for them to rent places, as over 90% of the housing in that area is owned by the state or by white housing associations, and the rest is given over to small factory production.

Every effort this community has made, individually, and now in the organised form of BHAG, to begin to discuss this situation and its remedy with the officials concerned, has met with a deliberate and calculated 'no'. When BHAG approached the Greater London Council, they were told to go to Tower Hamlets and its local council. When it approached the Housing Committee of Tower Ham-

lets, they were told that the council doesn't speak to squatters.

A letter to their MP, Peter Shore, who also happened to be Environment Minister responsible for housing, has met with no reply. The supposed Community Relations organisations have been less than unresponsive. An officer of the Tower Hamlets Community Relations Commission was himself implicated and is under trial on charges of swindling Asian families by fraudulently selling them squatted property.

Where do the Asians of the East End turn? Have they any option apart from doing as they are doing and 'requisitioning' the property of the GLC and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets? Objective facts and conditions, swindle, neglect, and a concreted determination on the part of the state agencies to dodge, disguise and deny their responsibility, has led to an independent movement of Asian workers in the area.

Independent of whom and what? Independent of those representatives of the Labour Movement who dare to persuade and bully the working class into accepting less. For the Bengali families of the East End, the prospect of sacrifice is absurd. Sacrifice what? The right to be housed? They never had it. A wage cut? As a community they have the lowest wage in the country. The sweated workforce has no sweat to spare on the social contract.

They have spent it instead on occupying the houses they need, to the crowbar rather than the crowing resolutions to accept or modify the governmental cuts. It is a form of self help which is at the same time an organised assault on the state, in that it is a requisitioning of state property.

The response of BHAG is significant because it comes from a community that has no stake in any social contract and can in no way countenance the persuasions of it.

We, in the *Race Today* Collective, assisted in the formation of BHAG, we are active in strengthening it as part, a significant part, of the developing political movement of blacks in Britain.

Such an independent black movement, whose public political platform is *Race Today*, is the revolutionary thrust of the black international community localised and particularised in the issues and terms of the British political scene. It is the 'race question' in concrete form — a question which won't be answered by excuses for delay and 'times are tough for capitalism'. It can only be answered through the provision of housing, through adequate resources from the state to provide it, and through an acceptance of the specific proposals that the movement of those who suffer from the lack of such housing have put forward.

Race Today Collective



## DEFEND MANNINGHAM

On April 24th, in the immigrant area of Manningham, in Bradford, Yorkshire, young West Indians and Asians defended their community against the National Front and changed the terms on which the fascist/anti fascist confrontations have so far taken place in British politics.

The National Front were on the streets of Bradford in an effort to persuade the white community that the black population should be removed from Britain. On this occasion, the Front were holding their meeting in a school situated in the heart of the immigrant community. Manningham is divided by Lumb Lane. On the one side the terrace houses are inhabited by the Asian community, while the majority of West Indians are housed in a large council estate on the other.

When the march began, it seemed as though the all too familiar scene which occurs whenever the National Front take to the streets would repeat itself. As usual, the counter-demo was larger. This time it was organised by the Bradford Trades Council. As usual, the most vociferous amongst them were members of the white left, screaming the slogans 'Sieg Heil' and 'Fascists out.' As usual, when violence broke out it did so between the counter marchers and the police. As the counter-demo proceeded the conflicting

interests of the marchers became apparent. For the organisers, Bradford Trades Council, the issue was the mobilisation of massive opposition to the Front. The black community, on the other hand, incensed at the fascist invasion, were concerned with defending their home territory. As the counter demo moved out of the immigrant area, many black demonstrators stayed put. Those blacks who continued with the march into the city centre soon returned when they heard that violence had broken out at home.

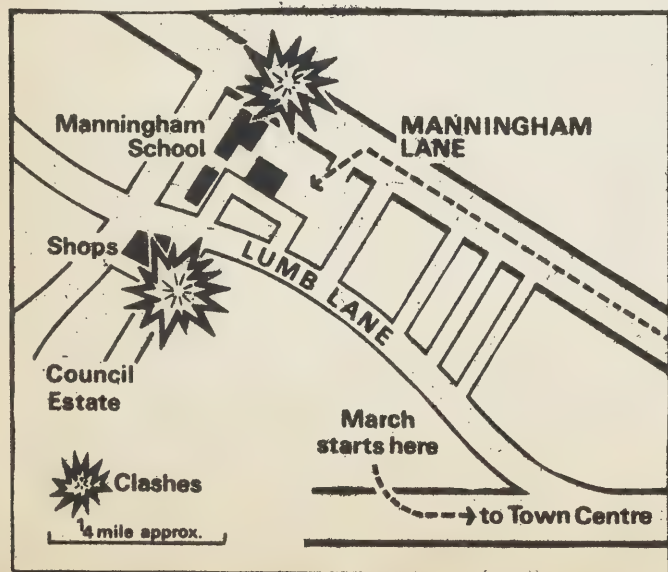
The young West Indian and Asian residents intervened with tactics different to those employed by the white left. They were on home ground. Picking up bricks and stones from nearby, they began stoning the police over the barricades that had been erected. This action placed the police in serious difficulty as it was not something they had anticipated. The police charged and dispersed the group. The youth retreated into a nearby lane and the police spread out to protect the school playground. Another hail of stones came at the police, forcing them to take shelter behind the school wall. The youth broke the windows of a police van and then those of an unmarked but well known CID car. They smashed the windows of a post office and a betting shop and then retreated into the council estate. The police came forward to retrieve their vehicles, but their attempts to move into the home territory of the crowd were met with a barrage of bricks. Unprepared again, the police soon abandoned any attempt to pursue their attackers. To the NF chants of 'send them back', the youth responded, 'Let's go back: who'll drive their buses?' 'Let's go back: who'll sweep their streets?' 'Let's go back: who'll empty their dustbins?'

This activity by the black community in defence of their territory received no press coverage at all. Like the events of bonfire night in Chapeltown, Leeds, it confirms the growing strength and confidence with which the black community deals with any attack on its territory.

On the following Monday the police retaliated by arresting five youths who were later charged with obstruction and assault on police. In the course of the arrests, they were told by the police that they were arresting them because they were black.

Attempts to avoid the confrontation at the march and the subsequent bitterness were made by immigrant organisations in the city. They called for a re-routing of the march away from the black community. They called for the rally to be held elsewhere, reminding the authorities of the grave provocation the presence of the fascists in the black community meant to Asians and West Indians.

Following the death of Kevin Gately in a fascist/anti fascist confrontation, the precedent was set that marches on this issue be re-routed to avoid confrontation. The Chief Constable of Yorkshire would have none of it. He was determined to give the National Front freedom of expression, abuse and the opportunity to incite a riot.





## LOOKYA! HERE COMES DE JUDGE

We reported, in the December 1975 issue of *Race Today*, on the clash between young blacks and the police on bonfire night, 5th November, 1975, in Chapeltown, Leeds. Twelve youth were arrested and charged on various counts, ranging from assault on police to threatening behaviour and criminal damage. Some of them were questioned, while at school, with the permission of teachers and subsequently charged. 26 weeks later, the defendants appeared at the Leeds Crown Court to plead to the charges. Additional charges of affray were laid against ten defendants. Below, the defence committee in their bulletin, *Lookya*, outline the recent developments.

On Tuesday 13th April, 1976, the twelve young men arrested for Mischief and Bonfire Night offences 1975, appeared before Judge Dean of Leeds Crown Court.

As usual, the hearing was well supported by Chapeltown's blacks. The police and other authoritative persons felt our weighty presence.

The procedure went well, with all but one youth who, under the instruction of a well known solicitor, was told to plead guilty to everything regardless of the consequences. As a result, the Judge ordered that the remaining eleven be kept in custody overnight, refusing bail for the defendants who pleaded not guilty.

We find it amazing that solicitors in Leeds, more often than not, advise their black clients (particularly our youth) to plead guilty to whatever the police charge them with, saying that the reward for this will be a lighter sentence. This is shit! A crime carries a certain punishment and, as far as blacks are concerned, we get the maximum sentence going, no matter what you plead.

The same Judas (solicitor) in question knew exactly what would happen on the first day of the hearing. In order to keep in with his client, the police and the Judge, in fact the entire judicial system, he advises his client to plead guilty.

The youth, who was told to plead guilty, walked away under a misconception, feeling well pleased with his solicitor and the system because the others were behind bars for the night and he was able to go free. Judge Dean said he needed time to assimilate the charges. This can only be seen as a form of judicial harassment.

Again Judas raised reporting restrictions for the press, particularly the '*Yorkshire Evening Post*.' They gave yet another sensational first page report on Tuesday's hearing, in the same light as their November reports.

At Wednesday's hearing, the Eleven defendants, who were locked up, were allowed bail, and in some cases, more than one surety was needed, where normally one surety (a parent) would have been sufficient.

On the first day, the Judge was extremely offensive to both the defendants and blacks in the gallery, but very strangely, on this second day, his manner was more polite. He ruled that reporters should limit the amount of news printed at this stage of the proceedings. Judge Dean emphasised, repeatedly, the seriousness of the charges, and warned that immediate arrests would be made should any of the defendants interfere with witnesses, commit any further offences, or fail to attend daily at the police station.

The community should not underestimate the extent of the collaboration of police, white solicitors and judges and its effects on those charged.

A Defence group has been formed to support the defendants and to organise activities to raise money for the Defence Fund. Already a lot of activities have taken place and fund raising is still being continued.

It is likely that the trial of the Bonfire Night Twelve will be a long drawn out legal process. Charges of Affray are now visited on ten of the defendants. The police will try to find members of the public to say that they panicked and were terrorised by the youths on Bonfire Night.

The police are hoping that the community will forget the anger and tension built up about the incidents arising from Mischief and Bonfire Night. At the time of this outrageous attack on youths in Chapeltown, the community pressed continuously for a meeting to talk about the confrontation. At that time, the community was well prepared to 'talk'. The police refused to meet. Their reply to this request was that they wanted to meet after the fuss had died down. In other words, they did not want to know us at the time of their 'kill!' A meeting has been arranged for the 29th April, 1976. The community must not forget the crimes of the police against black members. The police will attempt to justify their actions by pacifying us. They will attempt to dampen our spirits until the next outrage. Let no one go without remembering Chapeltown's history with the police, or with the idea of a compromise.



The action of the police has had its advantages in the community, although they had not bargained for the result. For too long now the police and other authorities have abused and misused blacks in Chapeltown.

The Education Department is another authority involved in the affairs on 'Bonfire Night'. They have met members of the community to try and come to some sort of settlement. As a result of these talks, the Education Department have laid down regulations affecting police intervention in schools, and therefore, limiting the authority of teachers who allow children to be interviewed by police while at school without their parents.

We are aware that the Primrose Hill School is responsible for the arrest of four of the twelve defendants now awaiting trial.

Our youth must not be found guilty of offences where the police have taken an equal part. Who will try the police for their offences against black youths?

We will never be able to walk the streets, not only of Chapeltown, but of the entire city if we sit back and allow the police to go free of their crimes against the community.

Lookya! The trial begins on Monday, 21st June, 1976.

Mek sure you go dey.

Chapeltown 12 Defence Committee.

# CARNIVAL AS USUAL

The 1976 Carnival celebrations will go ahead as usual. Over the Bank Holiday weekend, the streets of North Kensington (Notting Hill) will, for the eleventh consecutive year, accommodate thousands of West Indian masqueraders, steelbands, reggae groups and sound systems.

The event will be organised by an independent body, the Carnival Development Committee, whose members are drawn from cultural and political activists in the Notting Hill community.

The issue was sealed at a meeting on Friday 31st April between Carnival organisers, local councillors and the police. The Carnival committee presented their proposals to this meeting:

First, the festival takes place, as it did in the past, for two days — Sunday and Monday — over the August bank holiday weekend on the streets of North Kensington.

Celebrations will terminate at 11 pm on each day.

The huge build-up of crowds on the Portobello Green would be discouraged and greater mobility for the crowds would be facilitated by an increase in traffic free areas.

Three hundred stewards, drawn from within the community, will take the responsibility for bringing order and organisation to the celebrations.

Faced with these concrete and reasonable proposals, the council authorities and the police joined the organisers in a working party to organise the amenities for the festival — portable toilets, rubbish skips, first aid facilities etc.

In the last few weeks, it appeared that the very existence of the Carnival was threatened. Following last year's event, a highly organised group of white residents demanded that Carnival be removed from the streets of North Kensington. The celebrations

were too noisy, they said, over-crowded and generally caused a nuisance to residents in the neighbourhood. They passed round a petition, lobbied councillors and wooed the police. They exploited the local and national media and kept up a constant barrage of letters to the local paper, *The Kensington Post*. Another local rag, *The Golborne*, launched a campaign in their behalf, albeit inconsistently.

The dissenters were successful in drawing the support of local Tory councillors and the police. Alderman Methuen of the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council asked: "If they (the dissenters) wish to enjoy a quiet Bank Holiday weekend in their own homes, who is to deny them that right?"

Methuen suggested that the Carnival be removed to White City and the Acting Commander of Police, Ron Patterson lent his support to the idea. He threatened extensive policing should the organisers turn down the suggestion. Patterson went further. He took a member of the Carnival committee into his car and drove to Battersea Park, extolling the virtues of the Park as an alternative venue.

Meanwhile, the Carnival committee wrote to Mrs Lennon, the leader of the dissenting group, in the politest of terms, "*respectfully requesting an early meeting with your association to discuss complaints arising out of the 1975 Carnival celebrations*".

Confident that she had 'might' and 'power' on her side, Mrs Lennon's reply was arrogant, almost abusive: "*I am obliged to write asking you to refrain from sending any further invitations for myself and other members to attend unofficial meetings. Resident's views on Carnival have already been made quite clear to the authorities concerned and further comments are quite unnecessary, except of course at official meetings called by the Borough Council*".

The dissenters had fired their last shot. They were not prepared to discuss their grievances with



## LINKING THE STRUGGLES

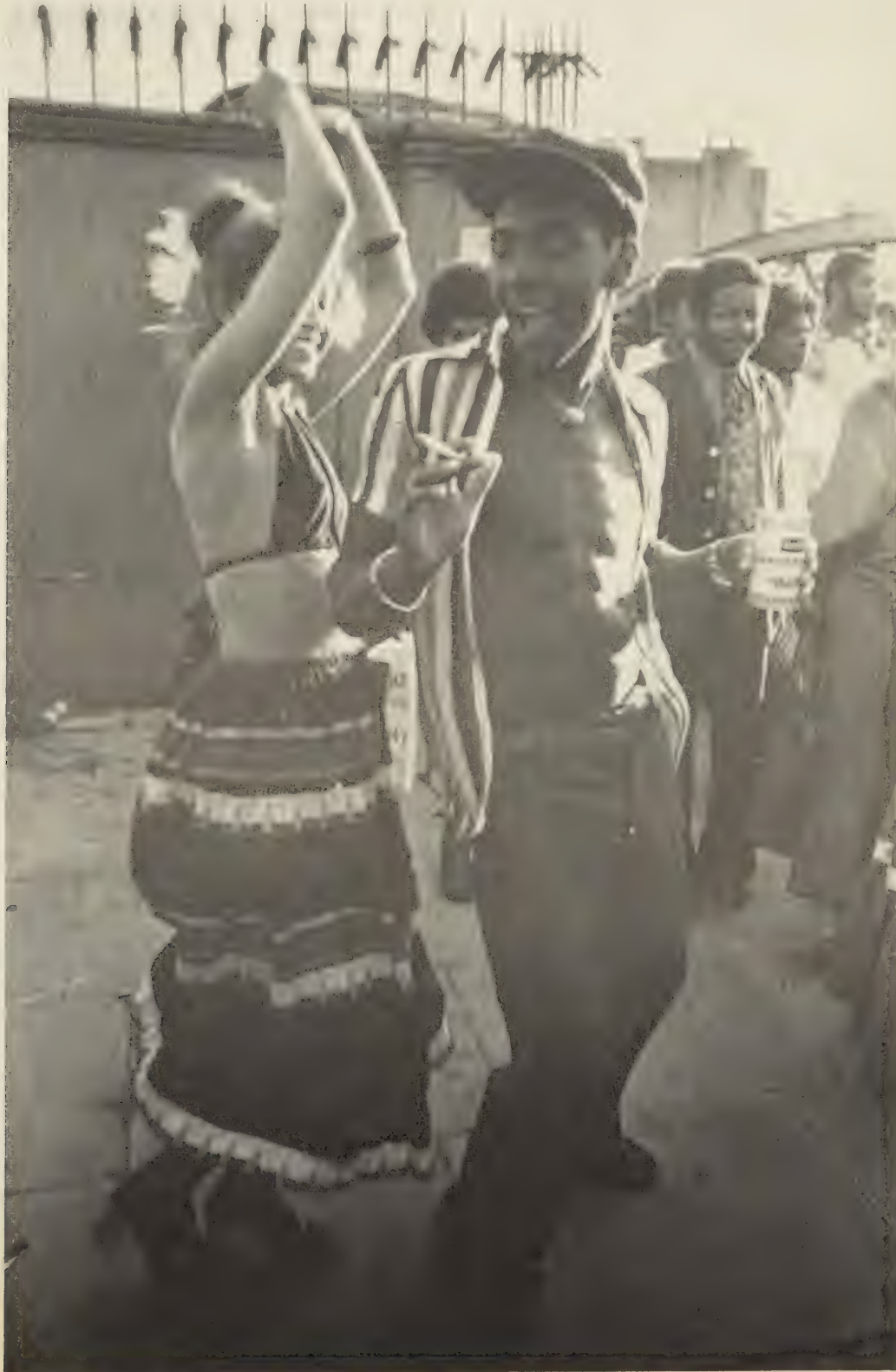
the Carnival organisers and could now be seen for what they always were — malicious trouble-makers. Even so, in drafting their proposals, the Carnival committee took up those genuine grievances of the dissenting group — No music after 11 pm, no congestion on Portobello Green, both of which were direct concessions to the dissenters.

We, in *Race Today*, had, for the past two years, reported and commented on both the 1974 and 1975 celebrations. We saw Carnival then and still do as “a combination of social organisation and artistic expression, and in both aspects we have travelled a

long way from the single make-shift steelband in 1956”. (*Race Today* Sept. '75).

We were, by implication, opposed to those who viewed the celebrations as unimportant or as a ‘joie de vivre’ coming from exuberant and exotic blacks.

The challenge to the continued existence of the event was, for us, an attack on the independent social organisation of blacks and our right to cultural expression on our terms. We replied in kind. Our campaign was uncompromising, sharp and aggressive. We make no apologies for the tone or the content.



Ron McCormick



## THE RIGHT TO DECENT HOUSING

Over the last month, homeless Asian families have rallied to the initiative of the Bengali Housing Action Group (BHAG), in the East End of London, to occupy empty state owned property. BHAG, a group which represents Asian workers and their families, has taken the only avenue open out of the dead end of negotiating with the Greater London Council (GLC) and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH). We have advised our members to take direct action and ensure that they house themselves in the flats and terraces which the local Council and the GLC have left unoccupied for a number of years.

BHAG has, in the last few weeks, attempted to negotiate with the GLC and with the LBTH on the question of housing homeless Asian families. Many of these families have been on the Council housing list for several years.

No private accommodation is available in the Borough. The state agencies, the GLC and the LBTH, own 87% of all the housing stock. Of the remaining 13%, approximately a quarter belong to Housing Associations and Trusts, and the rest are either owner-occupied or used as business and office premises.

Delegations of BHAG have twice met with high

ranking GLC officials and have met with very little positive response.

A letter from BHAG to the Chairman of the LBTH Housing Committee, Mr. E. Winterflood, dated 17th February, asked for a meeting to discuss the allocation of housing to Asian families who form 35% of the population of Spitalfields and Whitechapel. The reply, received a month later, says, "we do not speak to squatters' groups".

Earlier, members of BHAG wrote to Winterflood outlining the illegal activities of certain government officials and private individuals who have been fraudulently selling squats to Bengali families. The letter asked that the council discuss the matter. The reply, written not by the Chairman of the Housing Committee, but by Mr. Hart, the Environmental Officer for the Borough, said: "I can see no useful purpose being served by holding such a meeting as you describe."

The members of BHAG have learnt that the alternative to negotiation is action. If we are to be housed, we have to house ourselves, and we shall proceed to do so.

In January '75, the Borough of Tower Hamlets acknowledged that they had 1,320 empty properties





in their possession. They estimated that 3 million pounds would be needed to rehabilitate six of the blocks of flats which they have boarded up. Since then, though many more flats and terraces have been evacuated and boarded up, they have been able to find the money to refurnish only one set of 57 flats at Sumner House. The rest are scheduled to remain empty indefinitely. This being the case, BHAG has decided to launch an organised campaign to requisition such dwellings for the homeless families who form part of our organisation.

The Bengali Housing Action Group is itself the outcome of such a struggle around housing. BHAG was formed in February '76 (See *Race Today* March 1976) by Asian families who have already occupied state owned property as an answer to homelessness.

The *Race Today* Collective has been fighting alongside these Asian families since October 1974, when they were called on to investigate the fraudulent 'sale' of a GLC house to three families. Since then, we have been engaged together in a struggle for the elimination of racketeering in East End housing; for the freedom from harassment by officials of the Gas Board, the Electricity Board, the Health and Environment departments of the Council, the Police and the courts; and for a change in the housing policy of the councils, the GLC and the Central government for black workers and their families.

In March 1976, we were finally appraised of the attitude of the authorities on the housing of Bengali workers in East London.

*The Chairman of the Housing Committee of Tower Hamlets Borough refuses to meet a delegation from BHAG saying, "we don't talk to squatters".*

*BHAG demonstrates outside the GLC.*

*The delegation to the GLC is met by Richard Balfe, and Tony Judge. BHAG puts four points in support of our demand for a special housing policy which would mean housing of Asians within an Asian community area:*

*a) As the Runnymede Trust's report shows, and as we believe, a GLC internal report also demonstrates, the rules for getting to the top of the housing list by 'normal' procedures discriminate against black people.*

*b) The heads of Bengali families are tied to employment in particular areas because of the use that the British economy makes of their particular skills and their labour power.*

*c) The schools in E.1. are coming to terms with catering to the needs of Asian children. A change of school to a hostile environment would, as has been shown in Southall, lead to disruption of the children's education and would possibly expose them to the danger of racist attack.*

*d) Housing should not be used as a means of dispersing the social and community power that Bengalis have built for themselves.*

*On behalf of the GLC, Richard Balfe replies that he and Mr. Judge would 'consider the points' we had put. Mr. Balfe pledges an early reply to our demands. The next day his personal secretary phones the secretary of BHAG. She says, "Mr. Balfe has considered the points you put to him yesterday. Our position is that the occupants of Old Montague Street whose case you outlined, will be getting eviction notices which we have in our possession. The families in Old Montague Street will be rehoused if they are nominated to the GLC list by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, so we suggest that you get in touch with them."*

*"What about our demand that families be rehoused together to minimise the dangers of racist attacks?"*

*Her reply: "People don't like squatters do they, it's not surprising that these families are attacked?"*

*"Are you condoning these repeated and consistent racist attacks?"*

*"Oh no, but you know what I mean it's...er...um... I suggest you get in touch with the Tower Hamlets Borough..."*

BHAG has also written to Peter Shore, Member of Parliament for the constituency and now Minister of Environment in the Callaghan cabinet. The previous Secretary for the Environment published a White Paper last September entitled 'Race Relations and Housing'. This report says. "The Government looks to local authorities and other organisations concerned to continue, in the light of this White Paper, to give their considered attention to the housing of coloured people..."

The continued existence of rotten housing for blacks, the continued discrimination in housing allocation procedures, and now the existence of BHAG, makes it necessary for the GLC, for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and for the Minister of the Environment to give immediate and public attention to the demands that BHAG has put forward:

- 1) That there will be no harassment of people in short-life property from the housing authorities or, through them, from the gas and electricity boards.
- 2) That all Asian families in such property will be rehoused in acceptable accommodation in an area acceptable to the family.
- 3) That the housing allocation procedures and rules will be altered to do away with de facto discrimination against black people.
- 4) That all plans for redevelopment will embody the aspiration of black communities to have a decent roof over their heads, and live in the social environment which they, through years of struggle, have constructed.

Bengali Housing Action Group.



## 'GARIBI CHHUPAO'

The Government of Maharashtra has apparently changed the Indira Congress slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' (eradicate poverty) to 'Garibi Chhupao' (Stow it away out of sight). In March, the state Government launched a campaign to stop beggars from operating in Bombay and other cities. The campaign, hitting the weakest section of the vast army of unemployed in the State, is known as 'operation beggar.' It has resulted in the forcible removal of approximately 3000 people from the streets of Bombay to labour camps in remote parts of Maharashtra state.

Many of the beggars rounded up by the police and taken to special clearance centres, deny that they are beggars. Some of them have told reporters that they earn a living by washing cars, carrying market loads and doing other street jobs because of the lack of regular waged employment. Others are disabled, blind, lacking limbs or suffering from diseases such as leprosy. Some are children who live on the pavements of the city, keeping alive by offering to look after cars of the rich, by carrying monkeys and trained animals to perform for passers-by, or simply throwing themselves on the sympathy of the city's population.

So far, of the three thousand people rounded up, over two thousand have escaped, taking with them

the utensils and bedding that the rehabilitation camp issued. The rest of them, having passed through the process of being finger printed, classified as beggars by a special magistrate in a transit camp, have been put to work on the Kukri Dam Canal, digging earth for two or three rupees (20 to 30 pence) a day. It is the kind of 'employment' that few workers willingly accept — the money paid, far from being a living wage, is or were, tokens to disguise the fact of forced labour. The children, certified as beggars, have been sent by the authorities to train as agricultural labour in the interior of the state.

As the campaign started on March 1st, the special police vans began arresting all pavement dwellers who couldn't prove that they had any means of supporting themselves. Most of the beggars at the camp at Ralegaon claim that they were employed people and were picked up by mistake. They resent their forcible transformation from rags to wages.

The social Services Minister for the state has now issued an order to sterilise all the beggars who suffer from disease *and all those who refuse to accept the employment* the State allocates to them.

In the absence of any welfare programmes in the country, and with levels of unemployment and under-employment condemning the majority of India's population to starvation wages and grinding work, 'beggary' has become the lot of millions in India, 150,000 people in Maharashtra state alone. The police commissioner estimated that there were 75,000 beggars in and around the city of Bombay. The State government's drive is designed to put these skeletons away from the showcase of the city's streets into the cupboard of the labour camps. It is a move to pacify the urban middle class whose support, at this point, is crucial to the continued survival of Congress Government.





## CANADA

The Canadian government, having labelled a West Indian migrant a threat to national security, deported him under armed guard on April 30th.

Roosevelt Douglas emigrated to Canada in the mid-1960's as a student. He studied at the McGill University, Montreal, and was active in the black movement which swept North America in the 1960's. Late in 1969, he was among 96 West Indian students who occupied the Sir George Williams University's computer center, protesting the racism of a professor. Charged later on counts relating to the smashing of \$ 1.5 million worth of computer equipment, Douglas was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment. The immigration department, before all court appeals were exhausted, had moved to deport Douglas to his native home, Dominica, before he qualified for Canadian domicile (five years' residence).

In the normal course of events, any one issued with a deportation order can appeal to the Immigration Appeal Board. In order to deny Douglas that procedure, the Solicitor General and the Immigration Minister signed a special and rarely used certificate declaring him a threat to national security.



Contrast (Canada)

The Federal Court of Appeal finally upheld the government's right to use 'the security document' to block appeals to The Immigration Appeal Board and Douglas was given until April 27th to leave Canada.

A popular figure in left political circles in Canada, Douglas' deportation evoked a wide range of protest from the West Indian, Native Indian and white radical communities. The point was made that Douglas feared for his life in his native Dominica, where the 1974 Dread Act gives any citizen the right to kill another who is a suspected member of an unlawful association.

In taking the option of a choice of destination, Douglas chose Jamaica, and on April 20th, under the armed guard of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Douglas boarded a plane for Jamaica.

## GUYANA

Armed security police carried out a series of raids and searches between 14th — 18th April on the homes of key members of the Working Peoples Alliance in Georgetown and East Coast Demerara, Guyana. The police were looking for copies of the organisation's newsheet, *Dayclean*. They finally seized typewriters, stencils and other materials.

The Working Peoples Alliance is a two year old grouping of left organisations — RATOON, African Society for Cultural Relations with Independent Africa, (ASCRIA), the Working Peoples' Vanguard Party (WPVP) and the Indian Political Revolutionary Associates (IPRA). The Alliance is active among mainly the cane and rice farmers, the bauxite and sugar workers in Guyana. Its newsheet is one of the only independent papers published in Guyana at a

time when almost all publications are monopolised by the PNC government.

These raids are the most recent in the history of the PNC's attempts to stop the publication of *Dayclean* under the Publications and Newspapers Act.

Two years ago, the first copies of *Dayclean*, which had been printed in Trinidad, were seized and burnt at the Guyana customs in order to stop its distribution to the Guyanese public. Last year, Moses Bhagwan of the Indian Political Revolutionary Associates had to face a total of 16 charges under the Publications and Newspapers Act, for failing to put up the bond necessary for the publication of the paper, and illegally printing and publishing *Dayclean*. Moses Bhagwan was finally fined \$3,400 or, alternatively, he was given a three year prison sentence.

In a statement published on April 15th, just after his home had been raided, Eusi Kwayana, speaking on behalf of the Alliance was adamant that the PNC's latest tactics would not stop the publication of *Dayclean*.





# THE STYLISTICS OF MILLWALL

Phil Walker and Trevor Lee, both 21 years old, are two of the growing number of black footballers who have recently entered the professional arena in British football, with immediate success. Phil Walker received the *Evening Standard* Player of the Month award in April 1976 and both players, contracted to Third Division Millwall, have attracted the interest of First Division clubs.

Darcus Howe, Editor of *Race Today*, having followed the progress of Walker and Lee through the season, discusses the impact they have had on the game.

By the mid-19th century, British society had drawn millions of its inhabitants from a rural existence and planted them in urban centres, there to sell their labour power in return for a wage. In the course of time, these workers had won for themselves freedom on Saturday afternoons and they promptly created, organised, played and gave support to the modern game of football. They continue to do so today, more than 100 years after the Football Association was founded.

Football is a game of the collective. All eleven players are on the field at the same time, playing against the opposing eleven. The way to the opposite goal is marked by a series of interchanges of the ball and of positions between players of the same team. That is not to say that individual creativity, adventure and style are suppressed. Not at all. They must blend, enrich, or, as they can do at times, destroy or undermine the collective effort. It is quite unlike cricket in this respect, where the central activity is the contest between the individual bowler and the individual batsman.

The game of football, therefore, was created largely as a dramatisation of the experiences of the new urban worker. The individualised existence of the peasant in the countryside gave way to the collective existence of the new worker. In the factory or on the docks, let's say, interdependence, combination, collective activity were on the order of the day. A game which mirrors so closely the actual life of those who played it and those who supported it, must necessarily reflect the spirit and the attitude to life in general of the participants.

The Millwall football club was formed by a group of youngsters on the Isle of Dogs in 1885. The

players and their supporters worked in the shipyards on the loop of the Thames in the nearby locality. They were the new urban workers and Millwall were known as 'the Dockers'. Today, almost 70 years on, the composition of the Millwall team has changed to the same degree that the composition of the British working class has changed. That strict community basis is gone and they draw their players from wherever they can sign them, though still from within the working class. Other aspects have changed as well, none more so than the organisation of the working life that gave football its structure and character.

Working life today is dominated by the plan, with the time and motion study as its discipline. In any modern factory, the worker must produce according to the specific plan of management — so many articles must be produced in such and such a time. Each worker's task is clearly defined. Individual creativity, adventure, style are gone. The plan is safe, it guarantees production, or so the saying goes. It is this discipline that has formed and shaped a whole generation of the working class, penetrating and deforming almost every area of social and political life.

It would be a miracle if football were to escape. The attacking wingers of yesteryear, the goal hungry inside forwards, the dynamic wing halves, have disappeared. The roving centre half, the stylish full backs have gone too. They have even lost the formal description by which they were identified.

The fact that they have disappeared is nothing to regret in itself. The question is, what stands in place of what we had before? We now have the plan, dignified by the scientific terminology 4-3-3 or





*All photos courtesy of Jim Standen Left Trevor Lee. Right Phil Walker.*





4-2-4. Whatever the descriptions, the taste is bitter.

Only recently, we were told, the manager of the England team gave his players a dossier on the opposing team to study on the night before the game. Players, particularly in the professional areas of football, must play to the plan and organisation laid out by the managers. You deviate and you lose your place in the team.

The British football scene is now divided between those who hold to the status quo and those who rebel. And in this, both managers and players are joined on their respective sides of the line. One of the greatest players to emerge in the game in recent times is the Irishman George Best. Everybody agrees. Rather than continue to be dominated, he left the game. This is what he had to say:

*"Not to go out and get bloody kicked every Saturday afternoon, like used to happen to me and now happens to good players like Stan Bowles. Not that. They can stick that. For one thing it is not football and for another thing it is not healthy. What I want to do is to go out and entertain."*

Alas, entertainment is about the very last thing one could realise in British football today.

Millwall stands out as one of the few clubs who attempt to entertain, but the very fact that they are playing in a league with others, who are of the opposite ilk, restricts them.

It is Millwall who signed two players from within Britain's black community. Phil Walker and Trevor Lee are of West Indian stock. Both were born here in Britain of West Indian parentage. They come from a community that is today engaged in the transition from a rural Third World existence to the industrialised world. They are the new urban workers of today.

Lee and Walker are in British society but not of it. The culture of the plan is not theirs and more than that, they come from a community which has been severed from its roots in the Caribbean, without quite yet establishing the new. In these circumstances, adventure and creativity are given full reign.

It would be equally a miracle if these qualities were absent from their football. It is not race in the sense that Lee and Walker are genetically different from their white counterparts. It is a certain spirit, an attitude to life and society born in different historical circumstances.

They arrived from the amateur fringes of the game after being spotted by Millwall's manager Gordon Jago. That was in October 1975. At that time, Millwall played the defensive 4-3-3 formation — four men at the back, three in the mid-field who supplement both attack and defence, (it was invariably the latter) with three runners up front.

With Trevor and Phil, Jago was able to launch an attacking formation. Trevor Lee, the winger, whose reputation at his local school and among his fellow West Indian players was his capacity to demoralise the opposing full back with speed and a delicate swerve of the body, served as the extra attacker up

front. Phil Walker is deceptively reserved. Behind that reserve is a powerful shot and a capacity to tear defences apart with a cunning long ball from the remoteness of the mid-field.

These are the qualities that are in short supply in English football, qualities which progressive managers seek out. They exist in abundance in the black community. On street corners, on the asphalt surfaces of school playgrounds, on the Saturday and Sunday kick about, a new attitude to the game flourishes. These young black players do not carry the burden of a tradition, signed and sealed. They are in between what they have left behind in the Caribbean and a new tradition. They have nothing to lose, no material gains to secure. All is fluid, adventurous, spontaneous. New foundations are being laid.

In building new foundations, there is much in British football that is useful. It is not the case that young black players have everything to offer British football and the latter has nothing to offer them.

Phil Walker explains:

*"We really had a good coach. He used to play amateur football and he used to get us into the game and talk to us about it. He would tell us what we were doing wrong and help us out. We used to pass the ball much more, instead of just kicking it and going around beating everybody."*

Thus, it was early in their careers that both Trevor and Phil practised the subtle balance between individual skill, flair and creativity and the collective effort of the team. They played for the same school team, and, on leaving school, joined the amateur team, Waverly. There were seven blacks on that team. Later, they played for another amateur team, Epsom and Ewell. Up till then, they were both outside the reality of professional football.

Once they joined Millwall, the clash was sharp. Two worlds met, the entertaining and relaxed game with Waverly and Epsom and Ewell, and the harsh reality of professional football. In that early period, the first few weeks with Millwall, we spoke to both players. Jago had picked Phil and Trevor for the first team, immediately on signing them. Those were tough days. The stress and strain involved in the introduction to the harsh discipline of professional football forced both players, in this new world, to hanker after the past or seek in sunnier climes for a style and form which they hoped would fit their needs.

Phil Walker:

*"In our Sunday teams, every single one of the players were individuals. They did what they wanted. Like the full back could take on anyone on that field and beat him and there were about four or five players who could score a goal. The good thing about it was that we were never taught anything. We just blended."*

Trevor Lee:

*"Everytime I play, I am thinking of everything I learnt in training. They cram so much into my brain. When I get on the pitch, I think, well I ought to do this, I ought to do that. I*





*shouldn't have to. When the ball comes along, I should just act naturally. But it's like someone's got me on a string and they are pulling me one way and I can't go to the right or left. As soon as the ball comes I am told to play it straight back whereas it shouldn't be like that. My ideals are the Brazilians of course".*

That was in December 1975. They had, only two months before, entered the game and found that the world of Waverly and Epsom and Ewell was no longer with them. They were forced to create the new within the confines of League football as it stood.

Four months later, they were at the heart of Millwall's promotion bid from the Third to the Second Division.

Phil Walker talks about the period of transition and, the process through which the old was supplanted by the new:

*"When opponents got the ball and released it, I never used to stick to the player. I would react slowly. They kept on at me every week to try and work at this fault. I used to watch the ball instead of the player."*

He goes on:

*"You don't beat players in your half. You might lose the ball and it puts your defence in trouble, but when it is in the opponent's half you do what you want to do. Take on players etc."*

*"After the first few weeks at Millwall, I started to talk to a lot of the players, first team players. They would tell me how they liked to play and I would explain my style and how best we could help each other. Barry Salvage, the left winger, always liked the ball to his feet. Terry Brisley, who plays in the mid-field with me, would explain how he liked to play. I know Trevor mostly likes the ball pushed ahead of him, so he can run on to it. I found out from the two front players, who are small, that they would like the ball, not in the air, but to their feet. So that they could dribble where they want to. I found out when you talked to them you knew what to do and how to enjoy the game more".*

Their hopes and aspirations, in the first few months at Millwall, were based on reproducing exactly in League football, the boundless flair, skill and adventure which they undoubtedly established at Waverly with their five other black team mates, and later at Epsom and Ewell.

It could be reproduced, but in no way exactly as they had done in amateur football. The terrain was different, the objective conditions (I hate the term) were different. The question remained, could they adjust to the concrete realities of professional football and retain these qualities?

I never trust interviews to give these answers. The eye of the spectator is much more merciless than the rational responses of the actual participants, and nowhere is the truth as clearly revealed as in crucial historical moments.

Millwall, its supporters and players, are on tenter hooks. Three games remain to be played in the 1975-76 season. They must win all three if they are to win promotion to the 2nd Division. The first is against Brighton. The ground is packed and the tension is sharp. We know the formula. It is a stage made for the athlete who has that touch of class. No plan can guarantee anything. It is at such a moment, in the morass of monotony of English football, that the player resumes his mastery and power over all else in the game.

What will Phil and Trevor do in these circumstances, I ask myself? Isolated in the press box, I see a few black faces lost in a crowd of whites. It is the one game I am unable to look at critically. I cast those faculties aside. The ball is in the 18 yard box. Trevor, as he usually appears to all, is a spring that bobs up and down. He catches my eye and gives no warning of what is to come. The ball falls to him from the air and his back is to the goal. He is in an impossible position. No manager tells you in training what to do in such a situation. He falls backwards, and suspended in mid-air, executes an over head kick which settles the issue. I do him an injustice. It is not as deliberate and thought out as my description implies. It is one complete, free-flowing movement, spontaneously executed. They go on to win.

On the following day, Millwall meets Peterborough. The circumstances are the same. We must





win this one. (Sorry I am not impartial). Phil is majestic. He is laying off the ball to the forwards with style and precision. He receives a throw-in deep in Peterborough's half. He looks around and has yards of space. He powers his way goalwards and lets fly a left foot drive which curls neatly past the post. Composure, a sense of self are writ large. Millwall goes on to win this one too.

The promotion issue is settled. Millwall is now in Division Two. That is what the statistics reveal. The truth is much more fundamental. At crucial moments in this tense period both Phil and Trevor rose to the occasion with goals which indicate two things. Firstly, they have settled into the realities of professional football, the daily grind, the endless games against defensive formations. Yet, at crucial moments, that spirit of adventure, the flair and style emerge to win the day. No they have not lost these qualities.

Secondly, that individualism, so lacking in British football today, need not express itself at the expense of the collective. As Tony Hazell a seasoned campaigner and fellow Millwall player puts it:

*"Trevor and Phil have brought a new dimension to our play."*

He is echoed by the Millwall fans. Phil and Trevor have been nick-named **The Stylistics**.

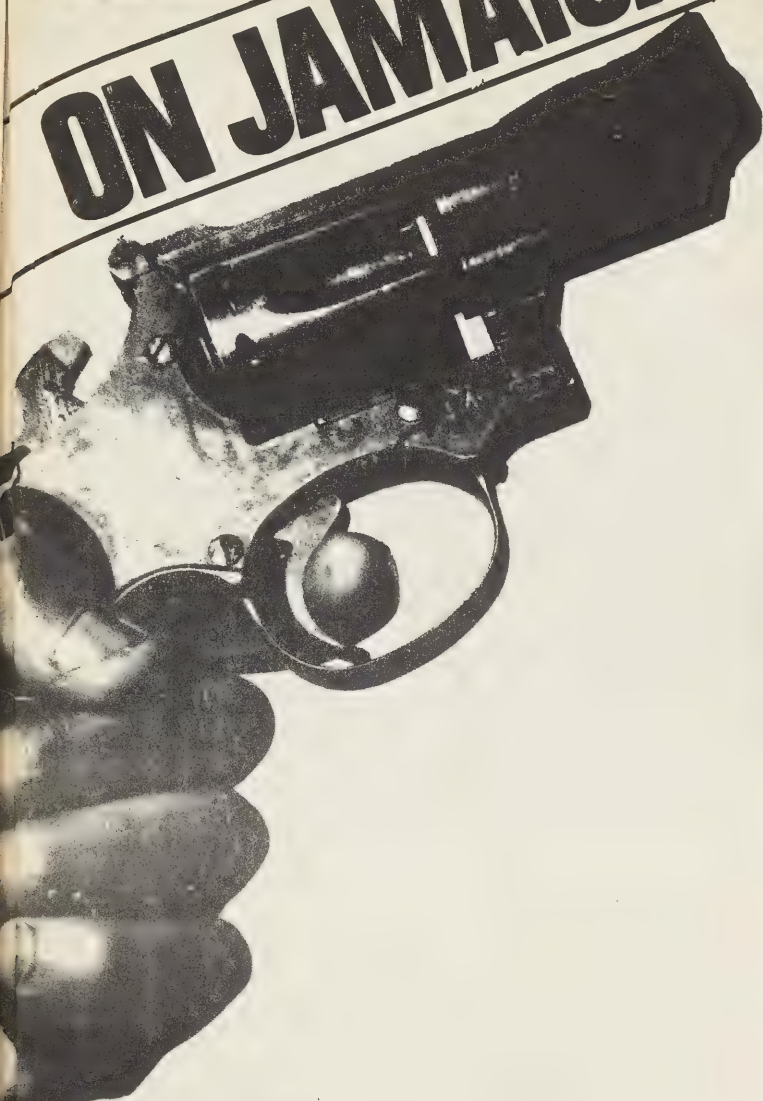
The temptation exists to generalise for the whole black community. That is to say, the role, the particular relation of Lee and Walker to British football is a reflection of the role, of the relation of the black community to British society.

**I resist the temptation. Let history decide.**





# ...BACKLASH ON JAMAICA



# ...BACKLASH

organising a revolutionary army which will first kill two thousand front-line PNP fighters to weaken the PNP and enable the JLP to regain power under Seaga's leadership.

During the early months of this year, \$18 million dollars was given to the JLP by the CIA through banks in the United States. Additional funds have also been given through multinational corporations operating in Jamaica. Seventeen top CIA agents have also been sent into Jamaica to advise the JLP leadership on the strategy to be followed for the overthrow of the Government. Details of the plot revealed so far are as follows:

1. \$25 million is to be spent within the ranks of the Jamaica Defence Force within two years to carry out a coup;
2. \$1,000 is to be spent weekly in each polling division throughout Jamaica to maintain 30 gunmen in each polling division;
3. The gunmen in each polling division must be assigned to assassinate front line PNP fighters and selected members of the PNP Youth Organisation and various other socialist and progressive organisations, including Workers' Liberation League and youth clubs under the umbrella of the Social Development Commission;
4. Youths recruited are to be trained in urban guerrilla warfare.

Since then, the capitalists have withdrawn millions of dollars from Jamaica, closing down factories, putting thousands of workers out of jobs while raising prices of goods and services to increase the oppression of the masses, blaming it upon the Government of Prime Minister Manley to turn the masses against the Government.

Certain businessmen have revealed that JLP leaders have contacted them for funds to finance their private army being trained in St. Thomas. Six hundred youths of South West St. Andrew have been recruited for that army, and a few are also being trained in the Jamaica Defence Force.

Through the assistance of a rent-a-car agency, the JLP have brought a fleet of bullet-proof Toyota cars into Jamaica to be used in guerrilla-type activities. At least 15 frontline PNP fighters have been the first to die and scores shot and wounded in the first wave of terror.

These and more facts have been gathered by South West St. Andrew Citizens Association and other organisations and individual citizens who are prepared to give evidence of this before a public inquiry and assist in speedily bringing these traitors and criminals to justice in order to prevent the democratically elected Government of Prime Minister Manley from being overthrown, safeguard the lives of citizens and speed up social change for the upliftment of the masses.

South West St. Andrew Citizens  
Association, Kingston,  
Jamaica.

Our Backlash columns usually contain letters to *Race Today*. In this issue the form is different.

Below, we reproduce political statements from groups in Jamaica and the Caribbean which are responses to those events in Jamaica, described in the feature article of our April issue.

## THE JLP AND THE CIA

It is now clear that Pernell Charles' campaign of terror against citizens of South West St. Andrew is part of an imperialist plot to overthrow the democratically elected Government of Prime Minister Manley and exterminate all socialists, militant PNP fighters and progressive community leaders in order to prevent social change in Jamaica.

Immediately following the transfer of the JLP leadership to Seaga, leading JLP henchmen began extensive organising of ghetto youths who have been forced by needs to live by the gun. These youths are told that the Government of Prime Minister Manley is leading Jamaica to communism, causing foreign and local capitalists to withdraw investments, smashing the economy and increasing the oppression of the masses; that the masses will shortly rise up against the Government; and that the JLP is



# ...BACKLASH BACKLAS

## THE POLITICAL GANG

Right at this moment, our community, our lives and our peace are being threatened by a serious danger. Murderous elements, operating from outside our community, are invading our district and threatening the lives of our citizens. These elements have proved they will stop at nothing to get what they want. Already, political gangsters have come to smash the Newland Youth Club. Already, men travelling in fast-moving Toyota motor cars are stating publicly that they intend to kill one of our youths. Already, young girls are being held at knife-point because they refuse the advances of these bloodthirsty thugs. Already, our peaceful community is being invaded by these fast-moving Toyota motor cars with gun-toting ruffians, declaring a state of war.

Six months ago, the Newland United Youth Club was formed out of the growing unity and friendship of the Newlands youth. Two men, Anthony Holness and Lansford Rennie, who live outside Newland, came over to assist us in forming the club. We were grateful for what we thought was genuine assistance coming from these men. We accepted these men as President and Organiser, feeling that they had our interest at heart.

But citizens, we were taken for a ride. Slowly their evil plans began to come out into the open. The first sign of this came out when they began stealing the Club's money. \$56.75 coming from a fund-raising bingo, \$10.00 donation from a citizen of Independence City, and \$14.00 given to buy footballs were captured by Rennie and Holness. For weeks we saw no sign of these men. Finally, when we caught up with them, they handed over a false cheque as payment. The bank refused to cash it and told us they had wanted to get in touch with Rennie for the past three months.

The second sign was when they told the Club that Granville Williams, one of the JLP Caretakers for Spanish Town, had promised \$100 to the Club if we won a football match. We won the match. A cheque for \$50 was sent by Williams to the Club. This too was a false cheque. The bank refused to cash it.

The third sign was when we discovered that Williams, Holness and Rennie had made a deal behind our backs for Williams to visit our Club and deliver a speech.

The fourth sign was when one Michael Dudney, known JLP strong-arm man, began visiting our community and our Club with Holness and Rennie. We became very suspicious of these men when Holness, Rennie and Dudney could be found nowhere during the recent by-election in St. Mary. The night after the elections, these men arrived in a badly damaged Toyota motor car and told some clubites they were just coming from fighting elections for the JLP in St. Mary. They boasted how they fired many bullets. During all this time they never attended any Club meetings.

Hijackers  
surrender  
Page 1

The Jamaica  
Daily News  
Chappell  
was out  
Page 20

Street warfare in Trench Town

# GUNS BLAZE AGAIN

•Cops watch as war rages •Small child wounded

Police today in Trench Town, Kingston, watched as a fierce battle between gunmen and police continued in the streets. A small child was wounded in the fighting.

The police were seen in the streets, some on foot and some in vehicles, trying to control the situation. Gunfire was heard from several locations in the area.

The fighting was described as intense, with both sides using automatic weapons. The police were seen firing back at the gunmen.

The situation in Trench Town is described as volatile, with a high level of tension and fear among the residents.

INSIDE

### Group outlines aims at IMF meet

The group outlined its aims at a meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington. The group, which includes representatives from several Caribbean countries, discussed the economic challenges facing the region and the need for international support.

The group's aims include promoting economic growth, reducing unemployment, and improving the standard of living for the people of the Caribbean. They also discussed the need for better trade relations and investment opportunities.

Election News

# BEWARE OF POWER!



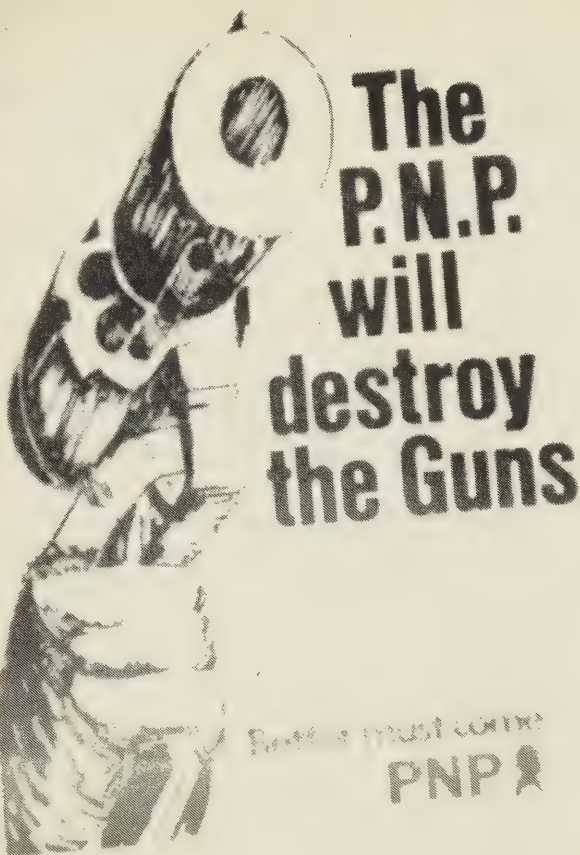
# BEWARE OF THE FIST!

WHO TRUSTS THE P.N.P? NOT YOU! NOT ME!

ON FEB. 29 VOTE J.L.P.



# ...BACKLASH...BACKLASH



Our suspicions were confirmed. These men exposed themselves by word and deed that they were no good, that they allow themselves to be used by capitalist oppressors who seek to hold onto their ill-gotten gains by all means, including the spilling of our people's blood; that their interest in the youth club was only to recruit our youths into their gang of cold-blood murderers.

## We The Youth of Newland Say No To This!

Our first and immediate step was to cut the link between the Club and these wolves in sheep's clothing. We voted them out as President and Organiser after numerous attempts to get them to attend a Club meeting.

## Citizens! That Is The Background To The Present Crisis.

On the 11th November at one of our regular meetings. Holness, Rennie and Dudney invaded and took over our meeting. They created a lot of disorder and broke up the meeting. The clubites defended themselves. In the confusion, Holness and Rennie and Dudney made their escape. Between the 11th and 12th November, Holness and Rennie were arrested by the police who said they were searching for them for a long time.

Since then the lives of every citizen of Newland has been put on the danger list.

On the 12th November, Dudney and a gang of four other men invaded the community in a Toyota car, asking for one of our Club members and saying they were going to "drop him".

Citizens! This is a reign of terror being planned against us and the people of Jamaica.

Already, the South West St. Andrew Citizens Association and the Workers' Liberation League among others, have exposed the violence and terror planned against the people of Jamaica by the JLP leaders, the big capitalists of Jamaica, and the American Government. Already, hundreds of misguided youth are being armed with guns and bombs and Toyota cars to kill off citizens who defend rights and justice. Already, they are invading youth clubs throughout the country to recruit or stamp down the youths who refuse to go along with them. Behind all the sweet talk, this is the dirty job that Holness and Rennie are doing. Who would believe these armed gangs of ruffians would bother with a quiet, small, peaceful place like Newland? How many other communities are they invading? How many other youths are they deceiving? Who bailed Holness and Rennie to set them loose upon us again? Our community and our country are threatened. Our lives are in danger. Our already little freedom is under attack. Let our voices be heard before it is too late!

Newlands United Youth Club, Newland District, Kingston, Jamaica.





# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

## A CARIBBEAN VIEW

An upsurge of fascist forces and the threat of a fascist seizure of state power threatened the very survival of the embryonic workers and farmers movement and the many progressive, left and revolutionary organisations that have emerged in Jamaica within the past two years.

The local capitalists, the middle-class and the imperialists have coalesced into an unholy alliance under the leadership of Edward Seaga and the political functionaries in the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) with the clear purpose of strangling the economy, creating social and political chaos and finally overthrowing the Manley government of the People's National Party (PNP) as a necessary pre-condition for the establishment of fascist rule.

Millions of North American dollars are in the hands of the JLP leadership to finance a massive anti-communist and pro-fascist propaganda campaign and a para-military fascist force, to pay supporters and buy-off underemployed youths and leading functionaries in the army and police and other institutions of the state. Millions more dollars of arms have been smuggled into the country and CIA agents have been filtering into Jamaica to work out strategy and tactics for "de-stablisling" the Manley government which would create the conditions for military intervention.

Events of the past 3-6 months give concrete proof of the Chilean-type fascist strategy and tactics that are unfolding. In the wave of fascist attacks, Manley and the PNP, continue to vacillate, forming unarmed defence groups to protect party property and depending on the police and army to maintain "law", "order", "peace" and "stability".

It is the historic duty and political task of all progressive, left and revolutionary organisations in Jamaica, the Caribbean and internationally to rally to the defence of the Jamaican workers and peasants in their struggle against the forces of fascism and for socialist power. Only the united, independent, organised power of the workers and peasants in

mass organisations throughout the country can ever hope to defeat the forces of fascism and advance the struggle; and only a Revolutionary Vanguard Organisation working among and struggling with the workers and farmers can build and strengthen these mass organisations and unify them in the present political situation.

Equally urgent for the defeat of rising fascism in Jamaica is the mass mobilisation of workers, farmers and students on a Caribbean-wide scale and of progressive forces in North America and Europe. Caribbean and international mobilisation can give concrete support and confidence to Jamaican workers and can wage a defensive struggle in the very heart of western imperialism to stop imperialist intervention in Jamaica and the Caribbean as a whole.

To advance the struggle against fascism and for a workers and peasants democracy, we call upon the Jamaican comrades to initiate the following concrete proposals;

1. Form an alliance of left and revolutionary organisations to build, strengthen and unite independent mass organisations of workers, peasants and students in the very process of struggle.
2. Call all progressive, left and revolutionary organisations, trade unions, associations etc. in the Caribbean and in Caribbean immigrant communities abroad to a Working Conference in Jamaica to develop strategy and tactics for a Caribbean and international mobilisation campaign. An urgent call should be made now for the immediate formation of Defence Committees in all Caribbean territories and in metropolitan centres to give concrete support to the alliance and to begin the mobilisation of progressive forces.
3. Begin the immediate dissemination of detailed information on all fascist plots and attacks, the vacillation of the PNP and the struggle and demands of workers and peasants.

The Caribbean Dialogue Collective stands ready to work with the Jamaican comrades in the implementation of these proposals.

CARIBBEAN DIALOGUE is the only information service that covers news, trends, events etc. throughout the Caribbean region and in Caribbean immigrant communities in metropolitan centres.



March issue includes:

- Political polarisation in Jamaica
- Black organisations and the struggle in schools, Toronto
- Letters from prison in Dominica

*We are the distributors of Caribbean Dialogue in Europe. Make your money order payable to us and send it to Race Today, 74 Shakespeare Road, London, S.E.24, England.*

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# REVIEWS

The Fosters. London Weekend Television  
Fridays at 7:30 pm;  
Bar Beach Prelude  
by Bode Towande  
Transistor Radio  
by Ken Tsaro-Wiva.

For the first time in our presence here in Britain we blacks have been presented on television as having an independent social existence. Always, we come alive on television when whites hate us, love us or want to help us.

The first example of this new trend is 'The Fosters', an all black family-comedy series beamed out by a major TV network at peak viewing time. An all moving, walking, talking version of 'Happy Families'.

Mr and Mrs Foster, the immigrants, worry about their daughter's virtue, despair over their eldest son with his aspirations to becoming an artist, and encourage the younger one, a budding intellectual, to study his books.

The programme's producers' concession to the idea of Blacks in Britain having a distinct and valuable social existence is merely a token. The programme lacks the courage of its producers' apparent convictions that Britain is a fully multi-racial, multi-cultural society. What we are presented with is a British adaptation of an American series about a black family.

The origins are particularly evident in the characterisation of the children who portray watered down versions of the cute, back-talking all American brat. The programme is saved from total disaster by the authority and authenticity the adult figures bring to their roles. This is due not only to their maturity as professional actors, but to the strength they are able to draw on of having had first hand experience of the Caribbean culture the series seeks to reflect. But however skilled an actor may be, he has a relatively passive role within a dramatic production and has to work within the limitations of the material available to him.

Why is it that the producers have chosen to adapt an American script to portray black family life when there are, in the black community here, such fine script writers?

There exists within the black community a powerful and creative cultural force, and a number of theatre groups have surfaced as part of this movement. A look at the work of one of these groups, The Black Theatre Workshop, reveals that it is not only as performers that blacks have a contribution to make.

The work of two Nigerian playwrights introduced the Black Theatre Workshop to London recently. 'Bar Beach Prelude' by Bode Towande concerned the Nigerian authorities' inability to produce bread for its citizens and its capacity to deliver the circuses. The action revolves around the careers of three men



West Indian World

who graduate from picking pockets to starring at 'the bar beach show', Bar Beach being the location for the public executions staged by the military regime to maintain law 'n' order in the aftermath of the scramble for oil-rich 'Biafra'. The negotiations between the jailer and the prisoners (he for his dash [bribe], and they for a few last luxuries) underlined the play's theme that crime does not pay—if you get caught.

'Transistor Radio' by Ken Tsaro-Wiva explored the relationship between Basi and Alali. Possessing only secondary school certificates that can't be cashed for food or rent, we first meet them holed up, hiding out from the landlady on her end-of-the-month rampage, beer bottle in hand. When the rent collecting aid is inadvertently left behind, the couple are provided with a solution to their problems. 'Mr. Heineken' cruises Lagos distributing transistor radios to the fortunate owners of 'empties', and the proceeds from the sale of the radio will keep them for months. Scheming and dreaming, they are rudely awakened by the arrival of a licensing officer. They must pay for a licence, or pay him off with a dash. Threatened with arrest for extortion, the officer makes off with the bribe, leaving behind a fake licence. Unable to play their radio, the couple listen to the voice of a hawker urging them to invest in Niger-pool, the national lottery.

It would be simplistic to criticise 'The Fosters' on the basis that white culture forms do not and cannot explore and celebrate the black experience. The writers working with The Black Theatre Workshop are equally influenced by North American popular entertainment forms, but their work has a strength 'The Fosters' does not, because they fully exploit the formula they are working from. What distinguishes the best situation comedy is the encapsulation of a whole world in the particularities of language and gesture. This Tsaro-Wiva achieves in 'Transistor Radio', in contrast to the parody of the black British social existence the episodes of 'The Fosters' have so far shown.

Akua Rugg  
Race Today Collective.



## The Political Police In Britain.

by Tony Bunyan

Published by Julian Friedman. Price £4.95.

There have been few books published in Britain which have really got inside the police force and fewer still which have been able to relate it to the broader political question. Critchley's *History of the Police in England and Wales* was a useful historical account. Anthony Judge's *A Man Apart* gives the best insight into police work from the police point of view and Peter Laurie's *Scotland Yard* is an informed but apolitical account of the development of modern policing methods.

Now Tony Bunyan has added to the list with an account of the development of the political police in Britain. His genius has been to marry the skills and techniques of a first class investigative journalist to a theoretical framework which moves far beyond a simply civil rights contest. Bunyan is concerned with the modern state, the emergence of the working class movement and its absorption into the liberal democratic system.

The book can be read on two levels. First, as an absorbing and slightly frightening account of the development of some of the repressive agencies of the state. Some of this we know already — particularly the more public activities, for example, of the uniformed police and, to a much smaller extent, of the Special Branch. Much of it we don't know and we owe a debt to Bunyan for digging out the material on the role of the MI 5 in internal surveillance and for the inside information on the Special Branch.

At this level, the book can be used as a handbook for exposing the activities of the repressive arm of the state. It may be a helpful book for the Irish militant who finds his door kicked in at four o'clock in the morning in Kilburn or the 'illegal immigrant' who finds himself being questioned by Special Branch at Leman Street before being dumped into the welcoming hands of Securicor at Heathrow Airport. It will definitely be helpful to those who have to explain the implications to family and friends.

At another level, the book is a contribution to the theory of the state and the role of the political police in it. The legal machinery already exists, for example, under the Official Secrets Act, for the complete suppression of all radical political activity: the police are not responsible directly to Parliament or Government but to a law framed by generations of the ruling class. The only answer to this is not the increasing representation of the left in Parliament but the sort of action displayed by the Saltley pickets, the thousands who turned up to demand the release of the Pentonville Five or the long hard struggle of the workers on the picket line at Imperial Typewriters.

This is basically a dangerous book for the state — hence Admiral Farnhill's and the D Notice Committee's attempts to get it suppressed. It is also particularly useful to the black working class struggle. For that struggle has consistently posed, against the

attempts of the state to absorb and infiltrate it, a spontaneity and creativity borne out of a different historical experience from that which gave birth to the British police. And time and time again it has been black people in the front line who have been the first to expose what is happening — the dead Pakistanis shot by the Special Patrol Group, the massive community response to the harassments of schoolkids in Haringey, the refusal to be co-opted into the police despite the expensive advertising campaign.

And it is an interesting well-written book to read. It's very carefully researched, contains a full bibliography and useful notes and although it costs £4.95 in hardback it's expected to be in paperback shortly.

David Clark

The history and practice of

THE  
POLITICAL  
POLICE  
IN  
BRITAIN

Tony Bunyan



**COINTELPRO. The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom.** Edited by Cathy Perkus.  
 Introduced by Naom Chomsky  
 Published by Monad Press. New York.  
 Available from Pathfinde Press in Britain Price 80p.

From December 1973, the American Government was forced, through several civil suits, to release publicly, documents concerning its various campaigns to undermine and disrupt black organisations, left groups and radical individuals.

This book contains information prised from the government in a civil liberties suit launched by the Socialist Workers Party (a Trotskyist organisation). It details the FBI's Counterintelligence Program's, subversion and disruption of the SWP. The strength of the book is that it lets the FBI tell its own story.

A large section reproduces FBI documents with deletions made by the FBI before releasing them. It includes instructions from Hoover's office to the various operatives and branches and the progress reports on the effect of COINTELPRO's disruption tactics. No better insight could be had into the workings of the FBI, 'the political police' of America.

The authors merely give information that clarifies the background to FBI memoranda. There are interviews with those who were victimised by the FBI and those who recall the effects of FBI subversion.

COINTELPRO was active throughout the '60's and was officially discontinued in 1971 when its activities became a public embarrassment to the government. This was the period that gave rise to two very powerful mass movements, the black movement and the anti-Vietnam war movement. The documents in this book testify to the seriousness with which the American state viewed these movements and its determination to stop them from developing.

*Memo of March 4. 1968 from J. Edgar Hoover states:*

... a final goal should be to prevent the long range growth of militant black nationalist organisations, especially among youth.

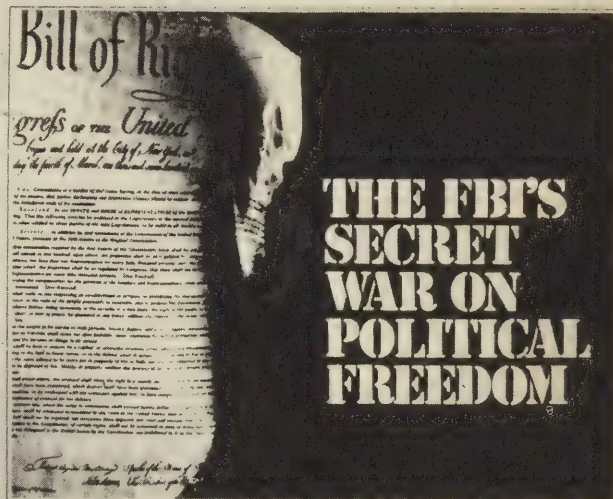
... We should emphasise those leaders and organisations that are nationwide in scope and are most capable of disrupting this country.

*Memo of February 13. 1970.*

... The leaflet is designed to cause disruption in the peace movement, primarily in the New Mobilisation Committee to End the War in Vietnam, and to minimise the growing influence of the SWP in the movement. It is also designed to cause consternation and confusion in the SWP itself. . .

The methods employed by COINTELPRO range from the absurd to the horrific, to being very effective, to having no effect at all. Infiltration, use of press contacts to smear individuals, instigating organisations to violence, harassment of individuals—particularly teachers — 'red' baiting, promoting splits within an organisation and between organisations, anonymous letters and leaflets, using the internal

# COINTELPRO\*



Exclusive: Documents from illegal  
 \*Counterintelligence Programs the  
 government was forced to reveal

Introduction by Noam Chomsky

weaknesses of a group to undermine them further.

Murder? That remains the unanswered question for COINTELPRO has not released all its documents on Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, and as Chomsky says,

"Predictably the most serious FBI disruption programs were those directed against black nationalists".

The release of such information, the exposure of the methods that were employed to quash these movements has revealed the nature of the American state to all sections of the American people, and to the world. The American bureaucracy has yet to recover from the impact these two movements have had on it.

Revelations of this nature demystify the popular contention that pervades contemporary politics, that the modern State is an all powerful body which cannot be undermined, let alone defeated.

Leila Hassan  
 Race Today Collective.



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On May 30th events to commemorate Africa Liberation Day will be held at the Abeng Centre, Gresham Road, London SW9.

Representatives from liberation movements will address the meeting. Play 'Dem No Wort e'. Begins 3 pm.



# Race Today

SPECIAL ISSUE

VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN JUNE 1976 25p.

## আমরা এ দেশ ছাড়বনা

COME WHAT MAY WE'RE HERE TO STAY





# COMMENTS

There has been a wide range of responses to the physical assaults launched by whites on the Asian Community in Britain.

Below, we document those responses which reflect the views of different sections of British society.

Our own view, a view which is formed out of what we have done and are doing on the ground, is recorded in the Editorial column.

"I have been told that I cannot refer to coloured immigrants so you will forgive me if I refer to niggers, wogs and coons. As for the murder of an Asian youth in Southall last weekend, that was terribly unfortunate. One down, one million to go."

**Kingsley Read**  
National Party Councillor  
Blackburn.

"We are already witnessing the physical consequences of this growing and inexorable transformation of some of the principal cities and industrial areas of this country. These areas are being transformed beyond all recognition. If that picture is dark and darkening, there is one factor which has not yet been injected.

I don't know whether it will be tomorrow, next year, or in five years, but it will come — and that factor is the firearm and explosives.

The thing goes forward, acting and reacting, until the position is reached — I will dare to say it — where to those areas, Belfast today might seem an enviable place."

**Enoch Powell**  
Member of Parliament for South Down.

"There is not a single section of the people of London who are more concerned to achieve a good relationship with the immigrant community than the police.

No one. Nobody at all. Neither academicians, social workers nor anyone else."

**Robert Mark**  
Commissioner Metropolitan Police.

"Preparation for war is the most effective means of preserving peace".

**West Indian Standing Conference.**

"In the British Council of Churches, we believe that the situation is dangerous and that further deterioration could harm race relations for a long period ahead. We therefore look for a strong lead from government at the highest level, to reassure the insecure and to establish the

determination of government to legislate for justice and fairness for all."

**Harry Morton**  
General Secretary  
British Council of Churches.

"The events at Southall are the consequence of a series of incidents up and down this country over the last few weeks in which Asians have been the victims of attack by individuals and groups of individuals who have made their racist views known. Political leaders who have encouraged these attitudes bear a heavy responsibility and it is high time that they denounced racist attitudes and the violence it generates. Public figures must make their position clear on this issue to those who see themselves as their followers — if they do not, they bear responsibility for the consequences."

**Mark Bonham Carter**  
Chairman, Community Relations Commission.

"During a time of racial insecurity and provocation we, the Friends Community Relations Committee (Social Responsibility Council of the Religious Society of Friends) would like to state that we identify ourselves wholeheartedly with the brothers and sisters of the ethnic minority groups in this country and with their efforts to achieve racial justice and racial harmony.

We feel in unity with all the like-minded individuals and organisations who are striving for a just society, whatever their background, and only hope that a closer co-operation will develop between us all."

**Friends Community Relations Committee.**

"I have appealed to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary to take action. We know the police are biased against us.

The Asian community need reassurance about the future. We want a better deal from the police, otherwise the more youthful members of our groups will take the law into their own hands."

**Praful Patel**  
Committee of UK Citizenship.

"I appeal to all my people. This is not the moment for provocation. Wisdom must prevail.

We cannot play into the hands of racists who would see war break out."

**Ajit Rai**  
Indian Workers Association.  
Southall.

"I have spent the day trying to tell people that we can't take the law into our own hands, that we can't operate vigilante groups without running the risk of people being slaughtered.

We don't want a race war. There is too much to be lost in violence.

Life would be easier though, without Enoch Powell and the National Front inciting people's feelings."

**Sibghat Kadri**  
Standing Conference of Pakistani Organisations.

"Racial violence is not a new phenomenon; it is something that black people know exists below the surface of things. Our researches show that overt race hate and the race violence is something that British society has managed to contain — except when it has been politically expedient to inflame them. . . . .

. . . The IRR notes that the present attacks of violence have extended to white liberal and radical groups as well as the Irish. But, as in any 'fascist' campaign the racist and chauvinist dimension is the most virulent. We believe that the paramount need at the moment is for collective action of all progressive forces in the black and white communities.

The voices of reason in and out of the black community who counsel us to 'keep calm' are mistaken in their hope that by maintaining respectability fascism will be appeased. The black community is under direct attack and the response — whether by way of self-defence committees or other community action — must be equally direct. We unreservedly support those moves towards organisation and solidarity within the communities of Southall, East London and elsewhere.

**Institute of Race Relations.**



# EDITORIAL

## A SHOW OF STRENGTH

The Asian community in Britain is presently being tested in an experience of 'blood and fire'. Three members of the community have been murdered by whites. Hundreds more have been physically attacked in their homes and on the streets by small groups of white males. White housewives have in some communities banded together to make the lives of their Asian female neighbours intolerable.

These attacks have been concentrated on the Asian community. For Asians, Britain at this moment is, in one sense, divided between those who attack them and those who don't. West Indians fall in the middle of this divide. A small minority of West Indians, young males and housewives, have been involved in attacks on Asians. The vast majority stand aloof, using space and time to state guardedly the dying myths and prejudices they have fostered towards the Asian community.

These are experiences which the *Race Today* Collective have gathered during the last two years. We have been involved, in this period, in assisting Bengali workers in the East End of London to build an organised mass movement on the issue of housing.

Neither is the Asian community of one mind. The blood and fire experience has brought to the surface those tensions and divisions which have been ever present in the community as it has grown and developed here in Britain.

The mass of Asians are either male or female workers or full-time housewives. In the East End, the men leave their homes at all hours to catch the shift. They are of all ages. They produce things mainly in the clothing industry. They receive, in return, a wage which enables them to contribute to house-keeping and return to work on the following day. The elders speak little English but the younger generation is bi-lingual.

A middle class has developed within. They speak two languages and are businessmen, lower-order civil servants and professionals. For this group, Britain is experienced as quite a different place from those who have nothing to sell but their labour power.

The middle class has gained the traditional leadership, which involves representing to the British State what they believe to be the interests of the mass of Bengali workers and housewives.

Until the recent attacks all appeared to be proceeding smoothly. The concentration of attacks from outside have had the effect of tearing the veil from the surface, bringing to the fore what the different sections stand for.

The middle class Asians do not want a fight. They prefer appealing to government ministers and the police to calm things down. Pressing on them are the mass of Asian families who have been facing

the attacks on the ground. The latter stand for the mobilisation of the strength and power of the community — mass meetings, mass demonstrations, vigilante groups.

Wherever the leadership has been forced to call demonstrations, they have, in most cases, avoided a community show of strength. In order to get around this, they call demonstrations in the name of racial harmony. They manage to muster groups of left-wing demonstrators who are in London today, Bradford tomorrow and Sheffield on the following day. Perhaps the odd Bishop from the locality is present. In this way, they hope to calm the Asian workers by pretending that the bishop and the left-wing jamboree reflect the white working class.

Every Asian worker knows the opposite is true. A fierce struggle has emerged in the Asian community on this question. In Southall, the very existence of the demonstration was threatened at the last minute by young workers who wanted a show of strength. In the East End, we had to fight off the jamboree and the middle class in order to carry out a mobilisation of community power. In all of this the West Indian community has been absent as a force.

Appeals to racial harmony, however well meaning and noble, have in no way affected that force which has been consistently attacking the Asian community in the last few weeks. A gathering of white left-wing and liberal forces can not be mistaken for a mobilisation of the white working class. To make such a mistake at this time is to attempt to lure the Asian working class community into a false state of security.

There is an alternative. We offer the line along which we have been proceeding in the East End of London. Only a mobilisation of the strength and power of the Asian community in itself and for itself could deter those who have, to date, viewed the community as an easy push over — a target for those frustrations and energies that are better spent against the state.

Race Today Collective June 1976.

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Monday night 31st May, 1976. Two gangs of white motor-cyclists rumble west on their well-tuned machines. Sixty strong, they park their bikes in Hanbury Street, E.1. This is just short of Brick Lane, the social and commercial artery of the Asian community of East London. Helmeted and leather-jacketed, they stroll down Brick Lane in a mob. They are enforcing the unofficial curfew, from twilight to midnight, that keeps Asian families behind closed doors.

Half a mile down Whitechapel Road on the same night, at approximately the same time, a kerb-crawling car follows a lone Bengali. He is, unheeding of the curfew, walking down to visit a friend. As he reaches the door and begins to knock on it, the gang from the car emerges. One of the watchers produces a knife and attempts to stab the Bengali in the back. The door opens in the nick of time. The knife sticks in the door as the rest of the Asians on the street come to their windows, summoned by the sudden scream. The gang get into their car and noisily drive away.

Monday 7th June, 1976, 9:30 pm. Sujlu Miah and Nuruz Zaman, two young factory workers are leaving their work place on Richard Street, E.1. As they turn the corner, twenty to twenty-five whites descend on both Bengalis, stabbing, kicking and punching. Both are taken to hospital, one of them is seriously injured. It is midnight before the police begin their investigations. They ask a few questions: 'Do you know any of their names?'

'Would you recognise any of them again?'

They take a few notes. Within twenty minutes their 'investigation' is over.

Meanwhile, we are informed by another Asian at the hospital that an hour after the incident, six Asian youth were arrested. They are being held at Bethnal Green police station. Down at the station, the police claim that they are holding an Asian vigilante squad. In the early hours of the morning the youth are finally released on bail, but not before the policeman in charge has seen their passports. 'There are a lot of illegal immigrants in the area', he says, and sends their friends at 3 in the morning to fetch their passports from five different addresses. All of them are charged with possessing offensive weapons. Four 'weapons' between the six of them, consisting of two milk bottles, a wooden stick and an iron lever. Of the possession of weapons of offense they have pleaded Not Guilty.

It is in this atmosphere of increasing racial and police intimidation that the Bangladesh Welfare Association initiated a meeting to discuss ways in which the Asian community of East London can best protect itself. It was to be, primarily, a gathering of representatives from local organisations. Over a hundred people attended this first meeting in the last week of May. A few days later there was another, attended by close to two hundred people. Neither meeting had been announced publicly and the news had travelled on the internal ghetto grapevine - mostly by word of mouth.

Official invitees made up only about one tenth of the entire gathering. By the end of the second

# NO RETREAT FROM THE EAST END

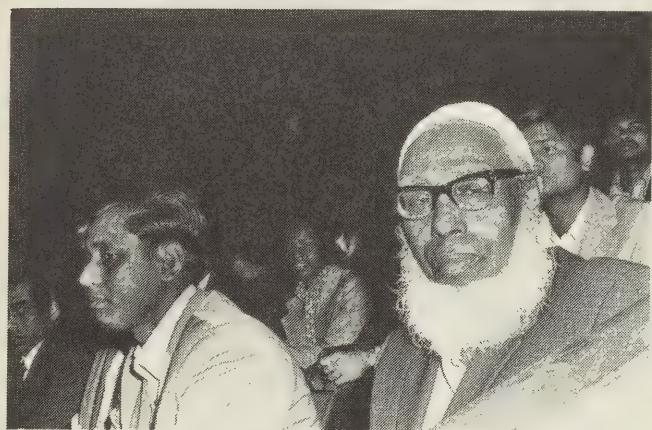


meeting a steering committee of eleven Asians had been elected to represent a cross section of the Asian community in the area. On the committee are a factory owner, two restaurant owners, a barrister, a member of the Pakistani community, a member of the Indian community, two unemployed youth, two members of the BHAG (Bengali Housing Action Group) and *Race Today*, and a worker from a tailoring factory. The new organisation was named the Anti-Racist Committee for the Defence of Asians in East London.

From the outset the meetings attempted to come to grips with a new situation. The Bengali youth of the area were in the majority at both meetings. They had called themselves together. They had used the cafes and meeting places of the community to set up an emergency grapevine capable of mobilising a few hundred people at an hour's notice. The assembly was faced with the organisational task of disciplining this energy in the directions it proposed for itself.

It proposed two. The meeting decided, unanimously, that there had to be a massive show of strength from the Asian community. Secondly, there had to be a continuous, disciplined self-defence organisation which would effectively stop white gangs, National Front hooligans, or any one





else, from picking on Asian individuals and on Asian homes. A few voices were raised in dissent. A couple of activists from the International Socialists (IS), who have been looking for a base in the area for years, were shouted down when they tried to dish out sermons from the mount of Asian power. More serious, and more seriously rejected, were the voices from the Bangladeshi community who saw negotiation, through the contacts that individuals had with prominent figures of the state apparatus, as the machinery of Asian self-defence.

The meetings overwhelmingly rejected this view. And with it, they rejected those personalities in the East End who have operated as a mafia on the backs of the community for years. Who are they? They are those immigrants who live off the labour of other immigrants, making contacts on the way with the state power and the labour movement, with MPs, with Councillors, with organised business, with the political hustlers who pose as representatives of the white community. This immigrant middle class is riddled with its own gossips and divisions, amongst owners of this enterprise and that, amongst those who pose as the leadership of the Bengalis by being hired by Community Relations Organisations, and between those who live off the rents and profits paid and made by Asian workers.



The standing meetings, for the first time in the life of the Asian community in Britain, completely rejected the mediation that their own middle class offered. In the East End of London the coalition of the actual forces on the ground consisted of the young activists of the Bangladesh Welfare Association, the activists of the Bengali Housing Action Group and the hitherto unorganised young resistance in the community. They came together to undertake both the tasks our meetings had set us.

During the final week before the meeting and the demonstration, we became aware of the forces inside and outside the community's organisation which were attempting to sabotage any effort the new alliance would make. On the one hand there were the police and their contacts in the Bengali community who spread the story that our march would inevitably lead to violence. On the other hand there were those whose traditional interests in the Asian community were threatened. There were the CRC hacks who saw their mediating services falling into disuse, threatening their jobs and threatening the illegal money-making activities that arise from their position as 'elders'. Two days before the demonstration the story was circulated, by people known to us, that the committee to whom the mass meetings had given their trust were Nat-



ional Front infiltrators. A small delegation of the 'elders' even went up to MP Peter Shore's office to complain about what they called 'foreign agents paid by foreign governments' in the organisation of the march and of the resistance.

The meeting and demonstration of the 12th June put paid to this trade in political maneuvering. Three thousand people from the community responded to the call from the committee. The Naz Cinema, the venue of the mass gathering, was besieged by the crowds who couldn't enter because the hall was full and overflowing. All along Brick Lane supporters waited patiently for the meeting to finish so that they could join the march.

To the organisations called on to support the meeting (*Race Today* was given this organisational task by the Anti-Racist Committee of Asians in East London) it was made clear that the demonstration had been called for the specific purpose of uniting and displaying the strength of the Asian community. They were asked to join and participate if their position was one of support. For those organisations who have spent years looking for someone to whom to sell their 'line', the letter added that banners and distracting publications, put out purely for party propaganda, would not be welcome. Most groups who attended the demonstration agreed and complied. The International Socialists (IS), about ten in number, decided to defy the organising committee's conditions. They thrust their banner to the head of the march. In spite of requests from the platform and polite reminders from stewards, they attempted to get reluctant Asian youth to carry their placards and banners. On being asked by one of the chief stewards to co-operate with the organisers, the leader of the International Socialists began throwing his fists about. The steward sent him reeling on his feet with a well aimed punch after a heated exchange of abuse. Other stewards jumped into the fray to stop it, and the police promptly arrested the organising committee's steward, leaving the assailant to go his own way.

The story is not told here merely to illustrate the point that these ponces on the Asian community can be controlled and run out by a handful of stewards. It is told also to illustrate the contempt which the IS demonstrated for the intelligence and organisation of Asian workers.

Apart from the arrest occasioned by the IS attack, the demonstration went without incident, though not without hostility from the police of the area. The Commander told the stewards that it was the last time the Asian community would be allowed to walk the streets of Whitechapel collectively. That is a challenge we on the organising committee readily accept. The intimate lessons of the present mobilisation have marked our friends and our enemies. It has isolated the turbulence created by the aims and interests of the middle class. It has stamped the mediators as irrelevant. It has brought about an unquestioning unity between the various Asian and black communities of the area. And it has confirmed our belief that our strength is our only weapon.

Roy Cornwall





# EAST END NOTES

## ASSAULTS ON ASIANS

Popular conversation in Britain today is riddled with references to 'attacks on Asians.' It is all too general. The *Race Today* Collective has been active in assisting to organise the resistance of the Bengali community in the East End of London.

Below, we record a list of the most serious assaults on Asians to have taken place between March and May this year in that area.

### March 5th

Artandas Moorjani and family threatened by Mary McKenzie. Threats with intent to cause fear "I just don't like Pakistani's." Fined £25 and bound over for a year.

Mrs Monahan Kaur stabbed by a man in a factory in Brick Lane.

### March 12th

Surab Ali attacked by four youths in Hanbury Street. He sustained a fractured skull.

### March 16th

Mansur Ahmed assaulted on March 16th at Hessel Street by John Groves.

### March 18th

Vijay Kumar Oet, 15 years old. Kicked, punched and robbed by three youths in Canning Town.

### March 19th

Two white boys arrested for throwing missiles and using threatening behaviour towards Pakistani boys in Brick Lane.

12 year old Mina Patel and her mother — child threatened at gunpoint and mother manhandled by two men.

### March 26th

Mr Moorjani robbed by two youths. Both arrested and released on bail.

### April 2nd

Abdul Stabur robbed by two youths. Both arrested and released on bail.

Mujir Ahmed and wife attacked by about 15 youths who demanded money — Friends who went to help were also attacked. They were kicked and hit with bottles. A number of people were taken to Bethnal Green police station. Investigation taking place. One youth made a statement implicating three others — no action taken.



# EAST END NOTES

Rahman Alavir punched and threatened with a knife.

Gulham Patel attacked and his briefcase stolen by three men in Stepney.

## **April 4th**

Mr A. Rouf residing in Weaver House was knocked down and kicked by seven men, two of whom he knew by sight. He called the police and nobody came.

## **April 8th**

Dudu Miah robbed in Brick Lane, Sheba Street

## **April 9th**

Mohamed Isbaq mugged by five thugs and badly injured.

## **April 11th**

Bottles thrown at Bengali youths in Brick Lane.

## **April 16th**

Salud Ali and Ansar Miah assaulted by M.J. Flood in Whitechurch Lane.

## **April 20th**

Stones and airgun pellets thrown and shot through the windows of Weaver House. (Bengali family.)

## **April 22nd**

Stones were thrown through the windows at Arthur Deakin House — (Bengali family.)

Pregnant Mrs Radica Ali punched and robbed in Forest Gate.

## **May 7th**

Mr Sariman Halder stabbed by a gang of thugs in Toynbee Street. They made no attempt to rob him. He suffered a punctured lung. Attackers drove off in a van.

## **May 9th**

Rihan Kabir, residing in Bernard House, chased in Brick Lane by gang with knives.

## **May 10th**

White boys attack Bengalis outside Daneford School. Four Bengalis arrested.

## **May 12th**

Idris Ullah, residing in Casson Street, chased from Vallance Road by three young men. Hit on the head and stabbed in the side. No attempt at robbery.

## **May 13th**

Shamsul Uddin, residing in Corbin House, Bow Road. At 10:30 pm he was assaulted by three boys in front of witnesses.

Jim Miah residing in Weaver House - his mouth cut by a bottle which was thrown at him.

## **May 14th**

Mr Uddin arrested. Broom and hammer taken from his home. He was charged with possessing offensive weapon.

## **May 16th**

Mozlu Miah, residing in Queensbridge Road, E.2. Attacked in Commercial Road by 10 youths in a van.

## **May 17th**

Dudu Miah, residing in Aston Street, attacked in Aston Street. When police arrived he was immediately asked if he was a squatter.

## **May 21st**

Rampart Street, after 11 pm 12 boys attacked three men. Police arrived after 20 minutes. Rana Miah in hospital.



# EAST END NOTES

## WHAT THE HOME SECRETARY KNEW ALL ALONG

The Home Secretary has been making pious noises in the last few days about the racist assaults on Asian workers. He visited Southall no doubt to convince the Asians that he cared. What hypocrisy!

Six weeks before, Roy Jenkins was well aware and briefed about increasing attacks on Asians. How do we know? We informed him. He chose to remain silent.

Below, we reproduce the letter, dated April 15th, which was sent to Jenkins on this very question.

*Dear Sir,*

On March 22nd, a member of our organisation, Mr Mujir-ud-din Ahmed, was attacked and beaten by a gang of young whites on Old Montague Street, E.1.

While the defence of our membership is the central issue here, we wish to remind you that in the East End of London, incidents of racist attacks against Bengali and other Asian workers frequently occur.

In the case of Mujir-ud-din Ahmed, the police were called and arrests were made on the spot. The police apprehended two young whites who were running away from the scene.

A full week later, none of the Bengalis involved were informed about the progress of police investigations.

*Race Today* telephoned the Bethnal Green police station on the 25th March, 1976. Our Assistant Editor spoke with D.C. Nicholls who informed us that, "those apprehended are juveniles and we don't charge juveniles." We understand that to date no one has been charged. Police officers have since informed Mr Ahmed that because he (Mr Ahmed) could make no positive identification then no charges would be brought.

We share Mr Ahmed's sentiment expressed as follows: "I might easily have died from the attack. Would the murderer have gone free just because I could make no positive identification?"

Mr Home Secretary, we are not satis-

fied that the Bethnal Green police carried out their responsibilities in this matter. It is difficult to believe that after police officers apprehended two suspects running away from the scene, no charges could be brought. An investigation into police conduct on this issue is of extreme urgency since there is a general belief among Asian workers in that area that police officers are reluctant in charging whites who physically attack blacks.

Secondly, Mr Home Secretary, these attacks are far too frequent to be dismissed as isolated incidents. We therefore urge a political initiative on this matter. We call on you, Mr Home Secretary, to issue a public statement which brings the authority of your office to bear against the violence of the attackers in the East End of London. We can hardly offer votes in return. In fact, such a statement might indeed, in the short term, lose votes for your party.

Finally, we must remind you that our organisation intends to take full responsibility for the defence of our membership, once it is established that those who carry that public responsibility fail in the job of protecting our lives.

Darcus Howe,  
Editor, *Race Today*.

Farrukh Dhondy,  
Sec. Bengali Housing Action Group.  
c.c. British Council of Churches.  
15th April, 1976.





# EAST END NOTES

## ON PATROL



East London. Any night in June 1976.  
Time: twilight to midnight.

Two cars are to set out from our base. Eleven of the volunteers who have turned up are chosen, mainly for their determination and trustworthiness. Everybody knows everybody else. Ten of the eleven have been out on previous nights. There's an orderly discussion: how to deal with the different situations we may encounter. The routes are decided. Each car is to meet the other at hourly intervals. Both drivers know the area like the back of their hands. One car is to check on the other bases from which other patrols will be setting out.

Nothing in the first two hours. We drive almost in silence. It's worrying that so many Asians, standing in groups on street corners or leaning out of the cafes

and doorways, recognise and acknowledge our mission. They wave, and one or two give clenched fist salutes. Down the Commercial Road to the East India Dock Road and then into Corbin House off Bromley High Street. We've been told that a white gang gathers there around pub closing time. The Asian tenant who brings the information has had his windows smashed, his house robbed, his children assaulted the previous day. The buildings around have a long history of shameful racist intimidation, abuse and assault. We are to go and talk to the Asian families on our rounds. Two of the families tell us, standing in their doorways, (which we do deliberately to inform the neighbours of our presence), that the police have been called each time there is an assault, and each time they have carried away the Asian who complained and

charged him. We suggest practical ways of collective self-defence. We leave them two phone numbers.

Several police cars pass us on the Mile End Road. As we turn down Toynbee Street, our driver spots trouble. Two young Asians are being followed by four young white men. The doors of our car fly open before anyone has a chance to say a word. The car screeches to a halt alongside one of the Asians who is about six yards ahead of the now running gang. We jump out through all four doors. The gang is obviously unprepared for an attack on more than two unarmed Asians. They shout to each other 'Pakis', turn tail and run. Our driver tries to get back into the car and chase them. They run down the pavement and disappear into Brune House. We pick the Asians up, and piling into the car, drop them a few hundred yards down the Commercial Road.

Back to Brick Lane to keep an appointment. At the corner of Brick Lane and Hanbury Street, a small crowd of young men has gathered. On the opposite pavement two young policemen in shirt-sleeves, their walkie-talkies to their faces, are bullying a young Asian. He has his arms above his head and one of the police officers is thrusting a lit torch right up his nose, Nazi style. We get out of the car and approach. "Fuck off or we'll have you for obstruction", the policeman says. He is asking the man they've stopped whether he's an illegal immigrant. They are radioing for a car. We cross the street and shout to the detainee in Bengali to tell us his name and address. He begins to reply and one of the policemen clamps a hand over his mouth to stop him. The police car arrives and they bundle him into it. We're back in the car. One of us phones to a solicitor who is on call, the others follow the police car to Bethnal Green Police Station.

Before the car gets to the station, the solicitor has the particulars of the arrested man. The patrol goes back to one of the bases and we call a member of the Anti-Racist Committee for Asians In East London (ARC-AEL) to deal with the police. The committee man sets out to find the relatives and the passport of the arrested man. From the experience of a previous night, we know that the police won't give bail without having the passport on hand.

The other car reports back. They've been stopped by police in Commercial Road. The Inspector tells one of the group, "We're picking you lot up, because the whites are smarter, they can't be caught with offensive weapons on them."

From our experience of other nights, on patrol, we know different.



# SOUTHALL: NEW PASSIONS, NEW FORCES

Eighteen year old Gurdip Singh Chaggar was murdered on the streets of Southall by a white gang on the 4th June 1976. His death triggered the release of tremendously powerful forces in the predominantly Punjabi community. Since the night of the killing the streets of Southall have been the scene of a constant demonstration. On the Saturday following, thousands of young people, mostly men in their teens and twenties, gathered in the streets at the scene of the murder.

The blood-spattered railings along the kerb of this road outside the Victory pub have become a shrine. A red shroud, garlands of flowers and the slogan "This Racist Murder Will Be Avenged", painted in white on the pavement, mark the spot where Gurdip was stabbed in the heart by a young white boy.

Within forty-eight hours of the murder, two spontaneous demonstrations of Asian youth set out from the Victory pub to Southall police station. On Sunday the 6th, these spontaneous dem-

onstrations rampaged the streets of Southall, stopping Jaguars and Rolls Royces with white occupants and venting their anger on them. Hundreds of police were rushed to reinforce the Southall force. While the demonstrations lasted, they kept a low profile, unable to contain the crowds. Two of the demonstrators were arrested on Sunday and released when the youth staged a massive sit-down protest outside the Southall police station. People quoted as leaders of the community congratulated the police on their forbearance, referring to their helplessness as patience. In the days following the demonstration, armed with this sanction from the 'leaders', the police have been carrying out raids and arresting individuals and small groups of isolated Asian youth.

Mr Ajit Rai, President of the Indian Workers' Association, businessman and long time politico of the area, attempted to cool down the inflamed tempers of the Sunday crowds for whom the slogan 'blood for blood' had become an organising cry. He confessed later to the papers that it was the most difficult day of his political existence. The youth in the street didn't recognise his authority or call upon his mediating services. They shouted him down. "We don't want any politicians, get off, we're going to manage this on our own".

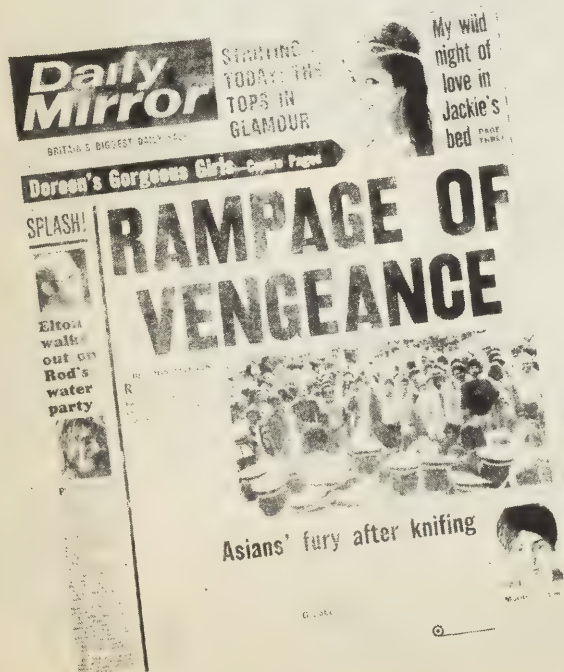
The scent of power, rather than revulsion against racist killing, attracted the heavies of the Asian political scene in the following week. Evident to them, and to anyone walking the thronged streets of Southall, was the new feeling and determination of the section of Asian youth that has taken up the challenge of racist gangs on the streets.

For the last two weeks this new energy has been struggling to organise itself. Ranged against the prospect of the self-organisation of the young (for





political purposes defined by themselves) are the leaders and forces within Southall and within the labour movement who have for years treated that community as their preserve. After the Sunday victory, when the youth felt that they had compelled the police to release two of their number, they gathered in various meeting places to organise themselves into patrols with the aim of physically intervening to stop the racist gangs. At the same time, the 'elders' gathered to preserve their standing as mediators for a following they know they do not have. The chiefs of the IWA, of the Sikh Akali Dal, of the Sikh temples, the spokesmen for national black organisations, and inevitably the political persuaders of the Communist Party of Great Britain, the International Socialists and other



external groups, gathered to discuss a demonstration 'for racial harmony'.

They met again on Wednesday night at the Sikh temple. Outside their meeting stood small groups of the young, who had by then surfaced several organisations, calling themselves Asian Youth, Youth Federation of Southall, Asian Youth Welfare and other names. They denounced the gathered leadership, which had seized the attention of the press and had begun their calls on the state to protect their community. "These people have done nothing," was the response from one of the young protesters. "Some of them have got rich. The party-wallahs are asking us to join them when what they should do is join us, otherwise they are finished."

Inside the meeting the 'elders' denounced the moves the youth committees had made. Several of the leaders told us "these people are not political, they have no politics. It is we who have political experience." In spite of the strength of this assertion, their voices and faces betrayed uncertainty. . . they didn't know if the youth would consider trading the new-found mass power for this 'experience'.

Right up to the morning of Saturday 12th, the demonstration that was announced in Southall was threatened by this schism, and on Friday night by a further wrangle amongst the political bosses. The Communist Party of Great Britain, divided from the other Communist groups by its support for Indira Gandhi and for the Indian Emergency regime, demanded that their spokesmen dominate the platform. Their local boss, Bob Alan, demanded that Vishnu Sharma, a member of their party, Mr Ajit Rai, the IWA (Indian Workers' Association) contact man in Southall, and Mr Buchitar Singh, from the Sikh temple, be the chief speakers. The dissenting organisation came from Mr Atwal of the Communist Party of India, (CPI Marxist) who carried with him the delegate support of the small left groups who waded in to oppose the CPGW. Finally a compromise candidate was chosen to speak for Southall — a white shop steward of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

The International Socialists, once again smelling a crowd and an opportunity to hold their banner between the television cameras and masses of organised people who may or may not have heard of them, proposed that the demonstration surround Southall police station. Members of the committee opposed the suggestion and the CPI (M) representative told the IS that they could take their own band of supporters to try and surround the police station, but that Asian organisations would not be with them.

Only on Saturday morning, the day of the demo itself, did the youth forces decide to join the demonstration, which was, with their major presence, ten thousand strong. In the ranks of the youth there remains the feeling that personal negotiations between rejected leaders and their governmental contacts will not safeguard lives in the community. That the handful of people who turn out to make political capital out of such marches will not be physically present to defend those who have to live and work in Southall.



# ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT



The Asian community in Britain is far from complete. There are up to 100,000 dependants who presently live in Pakistan, India and Bangla Desh. They have a right in law to join the heads of their families who live and work in the United Kingdom.

Successive British governments, while acknowledging that right in law, have in practice applied a bureaucratic device which is aimed at deliberately blocking the free flow of dependants into Britain.

Before 1969 the wife of Hussain Miah, let's say, presented herself at Heathrow Airport with her five children. After the normal immigration procedure, the family accompanied the husband, perhaps to the East End. There the husband would put his name on the housing list. The family is eligible for council housing. It is the right of every British worker. The children went to the local school, they registered with the local G.P. Family Allowances were paid to the mother for all the children but the first. Should Hussain lose his job, he would go to the local Social Security office and there he would be paid benefits for the entire family.

Only a deliberate apartheid policy

could prevent Asian workers from getting these benefits to which they are entitled.

Since 1969 such a policy has been in existence. By an administrative decree, passed by the then Home Secretary, Jim Callaghan, Hussain Miah's family must follow an entirely new procedure. No longer can that family board a plane bound for Heathrow Airport. The Miah's must leave their village of Sylhet and proceed to the British High Commission in Dacca. They would give their names and state their purpose at the reception desk. They are given an appointment—eighteen months to three years later.

Meanwhile, Hussain continues at his job. He produces and pays into the state's coffers all those monies levied against his wage. No benefits come his way.

Civil servants employed in the Foreign Office are the front line operators of this policy. They are the Entry Clearance Officers who examine prospective applicants at British High Commissions in Delhi, Islamabad and Dacca. Their counterparts in the Home Office hold the fort at Terminal 3, Heathrow Airport. Their co-ordinators are the senior

civil servants in Whitehall. They are the hard core middle class, reliable tools for implementing such an immigration policy. Britain must be protected from 'hordes of Asians. . .'. In short, Britain must be kept white. They are at one with this policy. It reflects the sentiments they hold.

In the last seven years these civil servants have devised the most humiliating methods of interrogation for applicants:

*"Where do you cook your food?"*

*"How many goats have you got?"*

*"Does the goat have a kid?"*

They have demanded documents of identification, birth and marriage certificates, in areas where the local custom is not to record these. They have seen to it that an enormous queue develops. In short, they have created a climate in which Hussain Miah's family must bribe their way to establish the fact of their identities.

Sections of the Asian community here in Britain have led a concerted protest movement against this state of affairs. In 1973 there were 374 letters from MPs to ministers about particular cases of delay. Last year, there were 1,722 letters. The



that caused split in the Government

# IMMIGRANT RACKET ROW

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, a voluntary body, has lobbied MPs, propagandised and protested on this issue. We in *Race Today* have added our mite.

It was enough to move a junior government minister. Alex Lyon, a new ministerial appointee, was made Minister of State at the Home Office. Pushed by the protest movement, he was determined to challenge the power of the civil service bureaucracy. He overturned 200 verdicts. That is to say on 200 occasions he vetoed decisions taken by civil servants which effectively denied entry to immigrants.

Alex, the crusader, visited the Asian sub continent. He issued new procedures for Entry Clearance Officers to reduce the queue. He bulldozed his way through the myths that hordes of Asians were seeking illegal entry into Britain. With his allies in the civil service, he estimated that there are 75,000 dependants awaiting entry. He wanted the queue cleared up immediately.

The civil servants hit back under the approving eyes of both the Foreign and Home Secretaries. Lyon had upset the apple cart and he had to go. Where government policy to deny welfare benefits to a section of the Asian working class is tied to the racist sentiments of top civil servants, the opposition is formidable.

The civil servants picked their man for the job. A Mr Hawley, a senior civil servant, was sent to the sub continent to compile a report on the situation. He resurrected every racist myth cultivated in the closets of the middle class. He intoned that an entire machinery was organised on the sub continent to encourage illegal immigration. He confirmed, of course, that the Asians were a devious race.

*The Sunday Times*, in an article, 'Immigrants: The Facts and Myths' (30.5.76) tore the Hawley report to bits on facts and facts alone. It was a brilliant piece of investigative journalism. Sheer politeness precluded the reporters from accusing Hawley of being involved in 'a put up job'.

Hawley's report was enough to cost Alex Lyon his job. The new Prime Minister, in reshuffling government posts, fired Lyon.

The matter did not end there. The war was far from over. Lyon replied publicly: "I have been trying at the Home Office to put some humanity into the administration of immigration law. . . Officials take the view that the queue is never ending. I don't. And they take the view that this country cannot stand more than a certain number coming in each year."

Lyon unwittingly exposed the considerable power granted to officials on this question. About politicians, this is what he had to say:

*"There is a feeling among some politicians, particularly those who pride themselves on their political sensitivity, and Jim [the Prime Minister] is paramount in this, that race is an electoral disaster for any party; that if you espouse the cause of black people you are going to to have a white backlash."*

Lyon had taken the conflict from behind the closed doors of the Home Office and the Foreign Office into the public arena. He accused the Prime Minister of playing the race game and senior civil servants of wielding an enormous power, way beyond their mandate.

Meanwhile racial tensions simmered beneath the surface in communities up and down the country. The press had been involved in whipping up hysteria over the fact that 40 Malawi Asians, British passport holders, had entered Britain after being expelled from Malawi.

Home Office civil servants were aware, from a series of complaints lodged with them, that physical assaults on Asians were on the increase throughout Britain.

Sensing the general climate, they deliberately leaked the Hawley report to two sources. Firstly, the right wing newspaper, *The Daily Telegraph* announced that they were in possession of a copy. In an article on May 5th, the *Telegraph* revealed the existence of a secret Foreign Office report, the Hawley Report.

Of all the papers they were best qualified to be one of the recipients of this confidential document. On the 28th of April, the *Telegraph* was in full flow on the conflict generated by Lyon's statements. The editorial of that date advanced the following:

*"Once it was not thought seemly for ex-Ministers left out of a new Government to advertise their disappointment and impugn the motives of their former colleagues. What makes Mr Lyon's continual complaining dangerous, however, are the wider implications it carries: he flatly and unwarrantably declares that the Prime Minister has "never had much time" for "justice for the blacks." He seems to represent himself as a sort of semi-official spokesman for the Asian and West Indian minorities with a right to a place in the Government.*

*He boasts of having used the Home Secretary's power to circumvent the immigration rules; he speaks almost casually of admitting 100,000 dependents within two years and adds, blandly, that this would not make much difference "except possibly to the schools service," as though this consideration were not the greatest and most well justified immediate anxiety aroused by immigration policy. What effect will all this have on those (and they are legion) who have suppressed their genuine fears about immigration and accepted dubious and cumbersome anti-discrimination laws on the understanding that the Government was honestly trying to exert a prudent control on the flow of immigrants?"*

The other recipient was equally well qualified. Enoch Powell, the right wing Member of Parliament and arch exponent of the 'Keep Britain White Policy', received the second copy.

It was clear that through both these sources the civil servants aimed for the mobilisation of the racist sentiment in the British population. It was their final shot against the movement which had been campaigning for the right of Asian dependants to enter Britain freely. Enoch and *The Daily Telegraph* obliged. The former issued his 'firearms and explosives' speech using the Hawley report as a justification. *The Daily Telegraph* in its editorial 'Truth Will Out' 26.5.76, had a field day:

*"What Mr Hawley says in the report which Mr Powell quoted in the House of Commons is true. Not only is it true, but the facts have been known to the authorities for years. No doubt there will be attempts to discredit both the report and its author. We must assume that the race relations industry will move into top gear. But now that the truth is out it will be impossible to put together another cover up operation. The two points which are now in the open are that the "racket" in getting immigrants from India to Britain is massive, and that even the pool of genuine would-be immigrants — dependants of those already here — is so large that the word "infinite" is a pardonable exaggeration. Obviously*



*the British Government has got to be very tough about ensuring the enforcement of our immigration laws, and must surely think about a terminal date for dependants."*

With the launching of this two-pronged attack all hell broke loose. That violence which simmered beneath the surface exploded in physical attacks against Asians. In order to protect their

immigration policy and maybe to win a mandate for further controls, the civil servants and politicians were willing to proceed over the dead bodies of Asians.

The old Asian leadership is prepared, it seems, to bargain away the rights of dependants for some mythical peace. Their speeches in the last few days do not indicate otherwise.

The new forces which have emerged

to challenge the old Asian leadership will be tested on this issue. The potential power of Asian workers is enough to win from any government a change of policy on immigration and much else besides. At least, the new forces are aware of this. They will have acquired, through the present crisis, a measure of the political skill they need to wield this tremendous potential power.





# INTERVIEW WITH AN IMMIGRATION OFFICER

Below, we interview an Immigration Officer who gives us an insight into the anti-black sentiments which dominate the thinking of Home Office civil servants.

Immigration Officers, as part of their job, interview people who wish to enter the United Kingdom for any purpose, whether it is to stay permanently or for vacation or to study.

In relation to Asiatics we enforce the Commonwealth Immigration Act which more or less allows an Immigration Officer a great deal of leeway. The Commonwealth immigrant who wishes to enter the UK has to satisfy the Immigration Officer that he has a right to enter the UK.

Before taking up my post at Terminal 3, I was sent on a training course for six weeks. Those who were in charge of the course did not say much, apart from the fact that you have to watch the Asiatics, Indians and Pakistanis in particular. I would not say it was an indoctrination course to immediately suspect anybody who was black, brown or yellow. But it was certainly suggested that Asiatics were a devious race.

Quite early in my job I came into conflict with my immediate superior over a black passenger. I stood my ground and was reported to the Chief Immigration Officer. The Chief said that he did not know why I bothered with all these wogs. *"They are thick."* Those were his exact words.

I would say that of the officers employed in the period I worked at the Terminal, 5% to 10% were men who didn't have prejudices. There was a large number of people who I can only describe as prejudiced by any standards. This would represent itself to the extent that they would detain people unnecessarily. They would hold people in custody in many cases on the **slightest** suspicion.

It used to make me ill. I felt really bad. I had a lot of sleepless nights. The attitude of Immigration Officers was totally unprofessional. You see the thing about professionals, such as lawyers, is that they do not let their prejudices affect their work. They must adopt an attitude of **unconcern**. These officers were totally involved in every single case. They were emotionally involved.

They are the sort of people earning £5,000 to £7,000 per year. They came into the service with 'O'levels and worked their way up. They came from the lower middle classes and are used to living in an all white area. They refer to Asiatics as bloody wogs, the Africans as coons etc.

I know one officer who was promoted to the Immigration Appeals Tribunal. I remember him saying that *"we have to surround Sheffield with the army and go in with bayonets and sort out all the blacks who are here illegally."* In my time nine of this type were sent to India as Immigration Officers. They were chosen because they had what is termed, the right attitude.

My personal estimate is that no more than 2,000 people, at most, enter Britain, illegally every year. Asiatics included.

We would get a Pakistani International Airline flight with 180 Asiatics on board. Maybe two or three would be interviewed and one would be eligible for refusal. ♪

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# REVIEWING THE PRESS

During the month of May the major national newspapers published, almost daily, feature stories on Asian immigrants — those who have recently arrived and those who are eligible to enter the U.K.

Below, Barbara Beese and Leila Hassan, members of the *Race Today* Collective, review the national dailies over this period.

## Who Reads What

In Britain, who you are and what you do determines what daily newspaper you read. *Daily Mirror* (circulation 3,864,923), *The Sun* (circulation 3,520,723), *Daily Express* (circulation 2,667,508), *Daily Mail* (circulation 1,728,466) are the most popular of the daily newspapers.

*The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* support the Labour Party, sell sex, scandal and sport, and enjoy the widest readership within the working class.

*The Daily Mail* and *The Daily Express* support the right wing of the Conservative Party and their readership is drawn mainly from the ranks of the professional working class, i.e. teachers, lower civil servants plus the small self-employed businessman.

*The Daily Telegraph* (circulation 1,315,061), *The Times* (circulation 312,475), and *The Guardian* (circulation 307,787), are known as the 'quality' newspapers.

*The Daily Telegraph* is overtly right wing and has a wide readership among conservative professionals,

management personnel and right wing politicians.

*The Guardian*, regarded as a 'liberal' paper, has a mainly middle class readership and is popular among concerned teachers, social workers and other professionals of the Welfare State machinery.

*The Times* is traditionally the establishment newspaper, with a readership that spans the entire political spectrum of the middle and ruling classes and is respected internationally for its unemotional reporting.

The power of these newspapers is enormous. They select news — emphasising certain aspects, and distorting or totally ignoring others. In so doing they can and they do make and break public figures. They can and do change official policies. They are capable of shaping the mood of a population.

Editors of newspapers therefore occupy the most powerful and privileged position. They decide, above all else, what the content of their newspaper will be.

## The Press And Race

Asian immigrants in Britain are today experiencing the consequences of the abuse of press power.

The opening salvo came with the news that expelled Asians from Malawi were coming to settle in Britain. Side by side with this news, a confidential Government report leaked to Enoch Powell claimed that previous estimates of potential immigration were too low and that a massive racket existed solely to break Britain's immigration laws.

How many were coming and who was going to pay? The prominence and slant given to the story

of the Suleman and Sacranie families, newly arrived from Malawi, who were accommodated temporarily by Crawley Social Services in a luxury 4-star hotel, could lead readers to only one conclusion: that thousands of immigrants were coming, and at their expense.

On May 4th, *The Sun* broke this story in a front page exclusive. Its headline screamed: 'Scandal Of £600—A—Week Immigrants' — Giant Bill For Two Families Who Live In A 4—Star Hotel.

Accompanying a posed photograph of the Suleman



family, clutching their UK passports, *Sun* readers were told the following:

*"Two homeless Asian families are living in style at a four-star hotel — at a cost of £600 a week from rates and taxes. . . So far it has cost £3,000 to keep them at the hotel. . . The first thing they did was to ring the local Social Security Office. Ten hours later a car took them to the £13-a-night airport hotel near Crawley, Sussex.*

*The families have taken over six double bedrooms — each with T.V. and bath. Breakfast is included in the bill.*

*Each family is drawing social security benefits of £20 or more a week and they have told officials that is not enough.*

*The bill sent to West Sussex County Council for the first three weeks was £1,863.01p. The only council quibble was about 75p. worth of phone calls and one early morning tea. All the rest was paid at once. . .*

*West Sussex County Council has taken responsibility for the family because they are technically British citizens without a home".*

The news created a national outcry which turned into a witch hunt against the family. Worse was to come: "We Want More Money Say £600—A—Week Asians".

*"The two homeless Asian families who have cost the rate payers £3,000 since arriving at Gatwick Airport are seeking larger cash handouts. — Despite their 4-star life at the airport hotel, Crawley, they complained they did not have enough money". (The Daily Mail 5.5.76).*

And worse, it was an immigrant conspiracy.

'Migrants Here Just For The Welfare Handouts'.

Ashraf Suleman, 16, was quoted as saying:

*'It is well known among our people in East Africa that as long as we have British passports we go straight to social security. That's why we came.' (The Daily Telegraph 5.5.76).*

*"The families — four adults and nine children agreed that British Social Security was 'just fantastic'. (Daily Mail 5.5.76).*

A statement, purported to come from Mr Adam Suleman was quoted widely: An inset in *The Sun* (5.5.76) in bold type, under the heading "Another 4,000 are on the way" said:

*Another 4,000 Malawi Asians are planning to come to Britain to take advantage of our welfare state, migrant Adam Suleman claimed last night.*

*He said: "Many families are going to come because they will get assistance to settle from the Social Security."*

*Latest official figures show there are 5,000 Asians living in Malawi who have the right to settle here because they hold UK passports.*

Yet other press accounts claimed that Mr Suleman could speak little or no English.

Inevitably, in the days following, this story was the major topic of conversation, in launderettes and supermarkets and in homes up and down the country giving fuel to a wave of racist hysteria.

Not one single journalist responsible for these news stories is unaware of the existence of the reservoir of racist sentiment among whites in Britain. Nor is any one of them unaware of struggles being waged by old age pensioners, unsupported mothers, pensioners, and the unemployed for increases in income from the Welfare State machinery. The news stories were aimed directly at diverting the energies of these sections of the working class from a fight against the state to attacks on the Asian community.

The London Wages for Housework campaign reported to *Race Today* the response of unsupported mothers and widows — Asian and West Indian — to these news stories. The LWH campaign are in contact with women who are involved in struggles against the social security offices and the inland revenue. Some of these women believe that Asians are given £1,000 on arrival here in Britain.

The post-bags of these newspapers reflect a similar response.

*Mr Healey is said to have declared war on a growing army of tax dodgers. I hope he now understands why people begrudge paying escalating rates and taxes. One of the Asians is reported to have said: "I left Malawi with my family because I could not feed them there." Where do Britain's poor and hungry run to? — R.C. Higson, Stevenage, Herts.*

*I have worked and paid National Insurance for 50 years, yet receive the princely pension of £12.74 to keep myself and retain some measure of human dignity.*

*If the payment to these Asian families is justified then people of my age are indeed the abandoned, generation — Jim Langley, Boreham Woods, Herts. (Sun 12.5.76)*

*This business of Malawi Asian immigrants living in a luxury hotel at a cost to the taxpayer of £600 a week is scandalous.*

*While this is going on, a man I know who retired this March after paying National Insurance contributions for fifty years is still trying to get his old age pension.*

*He is told by immigrant clerks at the local Social Security office that for some obscure reason he's not entitled to it.*

*When will we start looking after our own? — E. Ware, London, W.9. (Daily Mirror 7.5.76)*

Anti-immigrant fever had hit Britain and newspapers ensured that it would escalate to a national epidemic, by continuing to give coverage and prominence to the activities of racist individuals and racist organisations.

So that when the National Front, a fascist organisation, chanted at the first Malawi Asian arrivals 'Go home scum, we don't want you here', and demonstrated in support of Robert Relf, a white racist, when clashes between them and counter-demonstrators occurred, when Bob Mellish, a Labour Party MP, told Parliament that, 'Enough is Enough' and that immigration must stop, the papers had a field day.

*The Sun*, boasting that the Suleman story had brought them one of their largest post-bags ever, published letters full of racist bile. *The Express*, *Telegraph* and *Mail* did likewise. These first signs of a racist backlash did not deter the press.

News stories treated their readers to the 'numbers game', in which estimates of the numbers of Asian immigrants heading for these shores varied from paper to paper. Headlines talked of 'Asian Floods,' 'Asian Invasions' and 'Our Asian Burden.' *The Daily*



*Express* told readers it could be as many as 145,000. Another favourite story-line was the devious methods employed by illegal immigrants to get into Britain. *The Daily Mirror* following on from a popular Sunday newspaper told of a gang that smuggles in 5,000 Asians a year. *The Sun* (6.5.76) and *Express* (10.5.76) introduced us to the Maroli family, newly arrived from Malawi with £1,000 in pocket. They claimed that among the first questions asked by the family was a request for welfare assistance. Mr. Maroli was again quoted as saying that he didn't want to be put up in a luxury hotel, he would settle for a council house.

*The Daily Mail* (24.5.76) carried a feature story by Malcolm Stuart called 'The Front-Line Families' which focussed on the 'fears' of middle and working class white families who have immigrant neighbours. They introduced them as follows:

*The Arnolds are selling their terraced cottage to get away from Indian neighbours.*

*The Barringtons tolerate the Singhs in the next door semi, but they wish they weren't there.*

*The Moles welcomed the arrival of the Patels to their smart avenue, but wouldn't like to be outnumbered by Asian families.*

*All are in the front line of Britain's immigration dilemma. They live in Leicester, where a third of the Asian families forced out of East Africa have settled.*

*They are also sure that their city will be the eventual destination of many of Malawi's 6,000 Asians who hold British passports.*

The families had this to say about the stresses and strains of life with immigrants.

The Arnolds

*When they moved there in 1949, Leicester's Highfields district was known in the city as respectable working class. The menfolk were in work, their wives kept the doorsteps spotlessly scrubbed and there was a lot of chapel-going.*

*'We managed to keep it that way until about seven years ago,' said Mr Arnold.*

*'Then the coloured families started to come here. Now we are one of the few white families left.'*

*'You get prostitutes banging round the corner over there, noisy kids and ways that are quite strange to us.'*

*'I've always believed in standing on my own feet, buying my own house and putting money by for my old age, but I consider successive governments have totally ignored the true wishes of the majority of people in this country in letting all the immigrants in', he said.*

The Barringtons

*'I think we've been very tolerant, despite all the onion cooking smells.'*

The Moles

*Later her husband Donald said: 'I suppose one's natural fears are having a family of 15 move in next door.'*

*'In fact the Asians that buy property in this area are not those sort of people. Two children seem to be the norm.'*

*The Express* (24.5.76), in a feature called 'How Many More? Now Even the Asians Are Asking', found a willing tool in a rich Asian Major, Narindar Singh Saroop, of the Conservative Party, to support their anti-immigration line. Described by them as, 'living proof of how well Anglo-Punjabi integration can work', he was quoted as saying,

*"There is much apprehension among Asians here as more and more come over. . . My Asian friends and I know that the British are a warm and hospitable people and that the root of all the anxiety and fear which is being germinated are just three words — How Many More. . . ? The people already over here could be in danger if the numbers are not strictly limited. . . Mr. Mellish is right when he says enough is enough."*

Thus, on May 24th, 1976, Enoch Powell, most notorious for his public opposition to blacks, was able to drop his bombshell with perfect timing. The anti-Asian press campaign of the last few weeks provided the perfect basis and atmosphere for him to be assured of maximum attention. His soundings off provided front-page headline material. Gaining all the political mileage he could, he used the report to re-state his well known prophecy, that the presence of immigrants would be the catalyst for large scale social disorder and violence.

## What The Editors Say

Newspaper editorials are where editors usually comment and give their views on events of national and international importance. The content of editorials of the major newspapers over this period reveals a blatant abuse of editorial privilege. Headlines speak for themselves:

*'No Layabouts'* (*Express* 9.5.76), *'Enough Is Enough'* (*Express* 20.5.76), *'Four Star Provocation'* (*Mail* 5.5.76), *'How To Treat Banda — And The Asians'* (*Mail* 5.5.76), *'Truth Will Out'* (*Telegraph* 26.5.76), *'The Sour Suites Of Sussex'* (*Guardian* 5.5.76) *'Four Stars Too Many'* (*Times* 5.5.76)

*The Daily Express* and *Daily Mail* editorials stated the anti-immigrant position: both called for immigration restrictions and attacked Government secrecy on immigration facts. And just in case their readers missed the point stated and implied in news stories, that immigrants are welfare scroungers, they reinforced it for them. All quite unstartling and in keeping with their right-wing tradition. Sandwiched in between their lines of argument, almost as an afterthought, were pious pleas for harmony between races. When, however, we read:

*'There's a whole race relations industry dedicat-*



ed and funded to ensure that prejudice is reduced, it's about time we devoted some thought and care to ensure that prejudice is not gratuitously provoked' (Mail 5.5.76).

and

'This is a matter of vital concern to everybody living in this tight little island whatever his colour. This is an issue with dangerously high emotional charge — none higher.' (Mail 26.5.76)

and

'Tolerant kindly people free from prejudice are disturbed at the prospect of 142,000 immigrants coming to Britain from East Africa and Asia'.  
(Express 20.5.76)

and

'The worst damage to race relations is caused by the jibe that the O.H.M.S. stamp on social security benefits stands for Only Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs'.  
(Express 9.5.76)

and

'We don't blame the Sulemans and the Sacranies for being clued up on how to claim social benefits when they get here' (Mail 5.5.76)

it is clear they are pandering only to those of their readers who seek such racist ammunition.

Mr *Daily Mail* Editor, who were you 'devoting some thought and care for' with your news stories of Mr and Mrs Front Line Family? Who are you filling with 'dangerously high emotional charge'? And, Mr *Express* Editor, who are these 'tolerant kindly people free from prejudice'? Not *Express* readers, we presume, or even the readers you seem to want. The 'worst damage to race relations' is not the OHMS jibe you so piously talk about. It is editors like yourself who undoubtedly create such sick smears and pretend you are commenting on a nationally held concept of Asians.

*The Sun* and *Mirror* editorials were predictably like empty vessels which make the most noise, cynically paying lip-service to that good old 'socialist' principle of promoting harmony between races, and the right of the public to know the 'truth'.

*The Sun* editorial (12.5.76) demanded: that:

'Legally admitted immigrant families be treated fairly and compassionately'

that,

'Understanding between the races be developed through rational open discussion'

and that,

'Town Hall bureaucrats who think it expedient to place such families in luxury hotels, stop squandering our money'.

In the same editorial he made a special plea to be understood for printing a representative selection of letters from their readership. Sheer hypocrisy! Just what kind of 'open discussion' does this editor seek to generate when he prints two pages of letters almost totally one-sided? Obviously, Mr Editor, all of your readership missed the point that the intention of your journalist's coverage of the Suleman family was to develop 'understanding' through rational and open discussion'. If such readership response is something you are proud to display as 'fair treatment for all', then we, the black readers, do not believe *The Sun* is going to get it for us. Further claims that '*The Sun* has stood uncompromisingly for racial harmony in Britain' are at best rhetoric and, at worst, the rattlings of an editor with no principles.

*The Daily Telegraph* editor, the mouthpiece of right-wing politicians and right-wing civil servants, was informed beforehand of the behind-the-scenes maneuverings to leak Hawley. He used his editorial privilege to launch the next stage in their campaign — to get Hawley's conclusions believed and made the basis for an immigration policy which, "has got to be about ensuring the enforcement of our immigration laws and must surely think about a terminal date for dependants" (26.5.76).

Last, but not least, *The Times* and *The Guardian*:

The Crawley Social Services were criticised by both editors as being responsible for the outcry which had damaged race relations.

*The Guardian* editor (5.5.76) took his well-worn path of liberal justification:

'To blame the Asians, though, is too facile. . . They didn't ask to be put in 'a hotel'. . . The other unfair inference which will be drawn from the West Sussex scandal is that large numbers of Asian immigrants are living off the State. Yet of all minority groups in the country, the Asians are by far the most independent'.

which, also as the above quote shows, ended by trying to separate good immigrants from bad.

Neither editor, however, comes close at all to indicting the main culprits responsible for the anti-Asian campaign — their colleagues in the Press.

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# ...BACKLASH

# THE STYLISTICS OF MILLWALL



## FACING THE PROBLEMS

It was a delight to read your refreshing article on "The Stylistics of Millwall" which analysed the impact made on the British soccer scene by the introduction of Phil Walker and Trevor Lee. Appropriately, much scrutiny was devoted to the aspects of teamwork in relation to individualism, but I feel that not enough attention was given to some important considerations affecting black footballers in this country.

It cannot be denied that most black players strive for individualistic achievements and this is something that is sadly lacking at the present time in the British game, although vigorous attempts are now being made to inject flair and skill into the sport. But as we know, individuals come and go but the

supporters continue always to look to their team for success. It is their support that pays the wages and they have considerable power to influence the style of how success is achieved.

Many aspiring and talented black individuals are prematurely driven out of the professional ranks because they fail to dedicate themselves to overcoming the many obstacles facing them. One major hurdle is crowd appreciation and acceptance. Despite fierce partisanship, most supporters are not slow to recognise talent and skill in any player. Players need to possess strength of character to overcome the hostility of opposing supporters. A peculiar phenomenon in football is that some home supporters can "break" their own players through constant barracking and abuse. Nowhere is this more true than at Millwall whose small band of dedicated and loyal supporters have been branded at one time or another as "the most bigoted", "the most feared", and "the most vociferous". Uncharacteristically, their initial reaction to Walker and Lee was surprisingly a warm one, but it must be remembered that the team at that time was struggling. It had a new manager, new players, new directors, and the supporters were prepared to welcome any new injection of talent into a side which had just lost to Manchester United, its main idol, Gordon Hill. Against such a harsh background, and against all the odds of succeeding as skilful amateurs in a highly professional competitive arena, Lee and Walker have done much for the image and status of blacks in South London, and especially in the trouble torn dockland area.

Much of the supporters' early scepticism has since evaporated and the elation that goes with success is very evident. The real crunch comes next season in the second division and we all hope that Lee and Walker continue their progress where they left off at the end of the last season. Much will depend on whether or not they can keep together in the same team. (Towards the end of last season Lee was often on the subs bench).

My feeling is that a sole black player in a soccer club is to some extent in isolation when facing problems which are unique to him, whereas with two or more black faces in the same team they can share their problems and experiences and aspire together towards greater goals. Bobby Fisher and Laurie Cunningham at the Orient are a fine example of a flourishing partnership among the "brothers."



# ...BACKLASH ...BACKLAS

The days are not far ahead when black faces in British football will be commonplace, but even if any of the professional teams were to comprise 100% black players they will still have to combine all their natural individual talent as a team to win the local and national support that enables the lucrative wages to be paid, and to enable them to be part of that status quo which is really where it is at, and to where they are trying to get.

Outstanding individualism in soccer will always be prevalent no matter how much importance is put on the necessity of the collective. Many so called learned people in the game have put forward theories about the reasons for the failure of many promising and highly skilled black youngsters who have not made the grade despite their obvious potential. It is important that Lee and Walker make it. Important for aspiring black youths who need to see a way to the top through idolising their own kind. Important for the salvation of British soccer which can no longer afford to discard skill, flair, and talent. And above all, important for everyone in the black community as it would signify another breakthrough in our quest for unqualified equality of opportunity in what is supposed to be a multi-racial and multi-cultural society.

Herman Ouseley.

## TALENTED INDIVIDUALS

I find difficulty as yet another white observer, in commenting on *Darcus Howe's* analysis of *The Stylistics of Millwall, Trevor Lee and Phil Walker*.

*Trevor and Phil* are different. The problem seems to be in what way are they different, and in what way is that significant? Not just because they are black, since there are other black footballers playing in comparable obscurity. Not just because they are skilful, since there are other skilful players in the *Millwall* team. I would mention *John Seaman* who will be able to show his immense talent more clearly in the Second Division.

The difference is that they both can play with magic touches that sway and win a game; not to mention provide excitement and, dare we say it, 'entertainment'. Not a skill apparently inherent in white English footballers. Lesser managers now seem to search for team players, lesser coaches draw up plans rather than coach individual skills, lesser players submit. It gives me immense pleasure to be associated with *Millwall*, a club that contains not one of these lesser beings.

Our national game then lessens at the same time that society itself lessens. The media bludgeon us constantly to conform to the average ideal citizen. It is easier now to reject our individuality and believe the stereotypes. Our mental environment as well as the physical is threatened.

Still, we have this difference though. *Darcus Howe* suggests that it cannot be genetic but 'is a certain spirit, an attitude to life and society born in different historical circumstances.' Genetic differences, we would all agree, are out and it is hard to find fault in the 'spirit' theory.

There are however one or two worries. The difference between 'genetic' and 'spirit' is, I fear, too small for the white football fan. The door now opens to the generalisation that all blacks are physical; it could be that *Trevor's* and *Phil's* popularity is partly because they confirm what *Eldridge Cleaver* called 'the Supermasculine Menial'. That 'they are different' is always the first step towards discrimination. It also worries me that this popularity is used to appease guilt feelings. How do these same white fans treat their black colleagues at work?

Perhaps I am being pessimistic because I have seen white lads fighting white lads because they insulted their black heroes. I have seen people fighting for a piece of their shirts; I still remember a lad showing me a small piece of *Trevor's* shirt, telling of the trouble he had had to get it and how it was going above his bed to be kissed for luck when needed.

Finally, I do feel that in all this talk of 'blackness', 'spirit' and 'differences' it is sometimes lost that *Phil* and *Trevor* are, in their own right, two highly talented individuals. I do not wish to see any of the praise they deserve diverted.

Jim Standen.

## A SPECIAL FLAIR

Congratulations on your article about *Phil Walker* and *Trevor Lee* of the *Millwall* football club. It was one of the most intelligent comments on football I have read for a long time.

Certainly, the influence these two young black players have had on *Millwall*, its supporters and the local community is very encouraging. Not only have they won respect for themselves as superb sportsmen, but as you say, they have added a special flair to *Millwall's* excellent side.

Some credit for this must go to Manager *Gordon Jago*, whose enlightened and progressive policy led *Millwall* to gain these two players of great ability, and also to encourage several other younger black players in their youth sides to make the grade.

As someone who is involved with running school sides, the enormous potential of black soccer players is very evident, and one can easily predict a large influx of these youngsters into the game in a few years time.

This can only be good for football, for black youth and for the community at large. It is certainly good for *Millwall*, as one can see.

Dick Maunders



# ...BACKLASH...BACKLAS



## YOUNG BLACKS AND BRITISH FOOTBALL

The budding footballer starts playing football on the hard grey asphalt playgrounds the day he arrives at junior school. On the fast, frictionless surface of the asphalt, ball skills and shooting are forever being practised.

When the player reaches ten or eleven, he makes his first contact with organised football. Players are picked for the school team by the school PE teacher and, on the recommendation of the same teacher, players are sent to area or borough team trials. There are many football teams one can join outside school. They play mainly on Sundays, and many young players play on both days, Saturdays and Sundays. Scouts from the league sides watch inter-borough matches, and certain Sunday games for potential professionals. On recommendation from scouts, PE teachers, borough team managers or Sunday team managers, the professional clubs sign young players on schoolboy contracts. On signing, the young player is invited to train once or twice a week under the guidance of the club coaches, until he is 15-16. After entering secondary school, new fields are open to the player. Each year group has its own football team; there are borough team trials, county team trials, and the national schoolboy team. The Sunday teams are now very 'professional'. All football at this level mimics the methods employed by league teams. The majority of county team players are invariably also schoolboy signings.

Scouts and clubs are even more interested when

players get to the ages of 15 when apprentice signings are made. As an apprentice the player is taught the trade. He trains full time at the club and is paid a wage. Those who are not signed as apprentices join amateur sides and in some cases go out to play professional football.

Few black players have the enthusiasm to battle on to the English professional scene as it stands today.

British football is presently played with a great deal of physical contact and stamina training for the purpose of chasing long high balls. This type of football is very organised, almost mathematical, with the offside rule dictating all play.

Many black players find that there is little respect for skill with skilful players at the receiving end of the majority of fouls and therefore injuries. When these players complain, they are told, "it's a man's game", the anthem of British football. There are few players in the game with true flair and skill, for they do not last under this constant barrage of attacks.

These attitudes which stress the physical are carefully cultivated and nursed by managers and trainers at all levels of the game, especially in the league teams. The black player rejects these values. He knows how he should play, he knows how he likes to play. He has seen his way of football win the 1970 World Cup for Brazil.

Talking to many black players about why there aren't many black footballers in the league side, many reasons arise. These range from the predominantly stamina-based training, to the dull tactics. A basic reason to recur over and over again is the conflict of ideas between the British trainer (from PE teacher, to club coach), and the black footballer, on how the black footballer should play football. On many occasions the black player finds the trainer saying or implying; "It's alright to be flash son, but you are going to play football my way." When the black player does not comply with these orders two things occur. Firstly, the black player elects to be rid of any form of organised British football. There is consequently an enormous waste of talent among these young blacks as they refuse to play for any team, even the junior school side. The players, whose enthusiasm for the game has not been completely repressed or stifled, form themselves into teams or groups for park "kick around" games. Others form themselves into their own organised teams which join Saturday leagues. A good example is The Continentals of North London.

The second result of the conflict is that trainers, coaches and managers see the black player as undoubtedly skilful but rebellious, stubborn, hard to train and therefore unsuited to British football.

It is British football that has to change before blacks can play a bigger part in the game. In the last five years we have witnessed the beginning of this change.

Michael La Rose



# RACE TODAY 74 Shakespeare Road, London SE 24 0PT Tel: 01-737 2268

## BACK ISSUES

Below is a list of back issues of *Race Today*, available from our office at 40p each including postage.

### 1976

*January:* India: Tyranny and Resistance: Busing in Ealing: 30 Families Join East End Campaign: Walter Rodney Visits London

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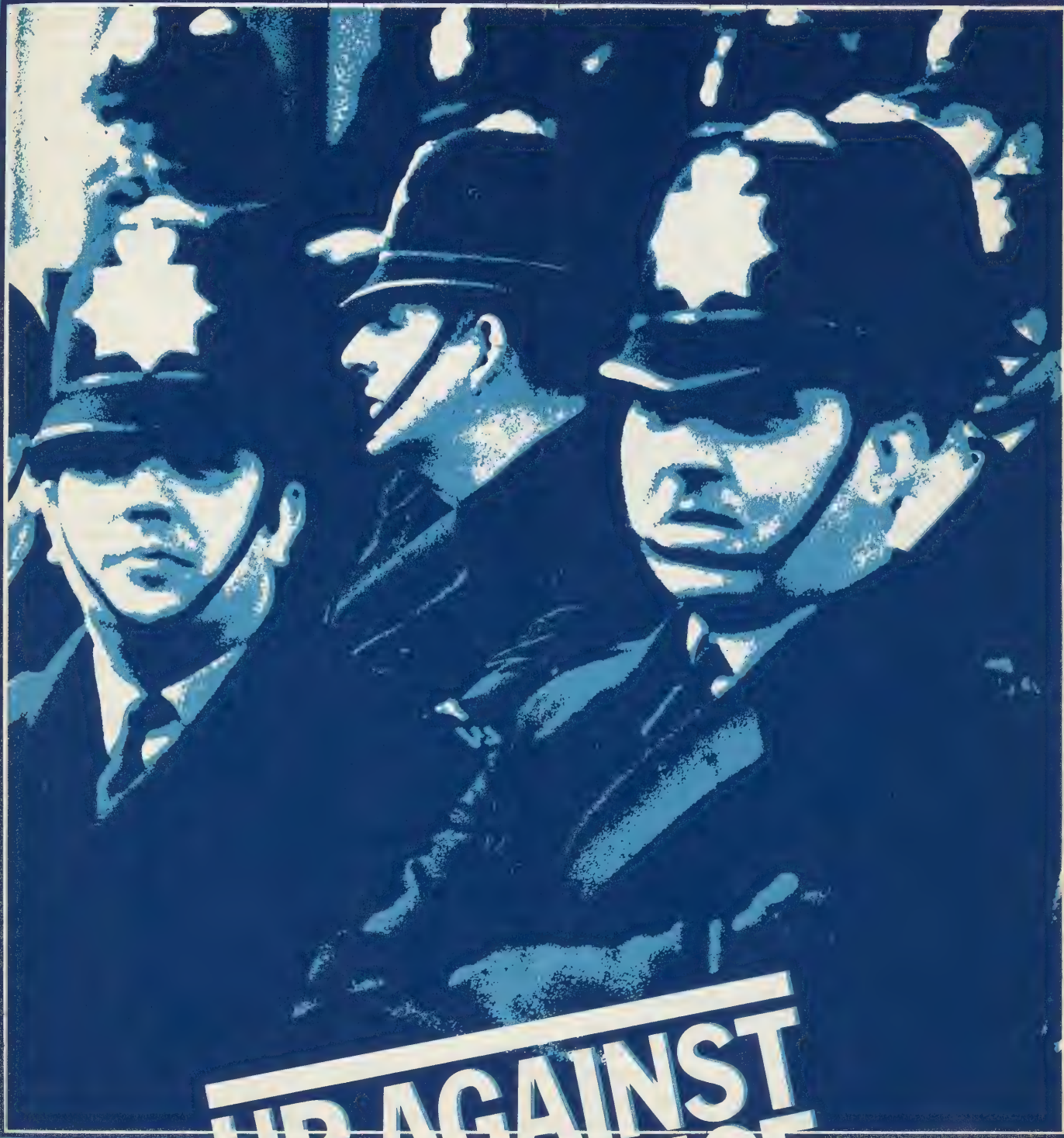
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# Race Today

VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN JULY/AUGUST 1976 25p



**UP AGAINST  
THE POLICE**

WE CAN FIGHT FOR BETTER HOUSING — AND WIN



# LETTERS

## RACIST ATTACKS

*Dear Race Today,*

I was walking today in Scrubs Lane, London NW10 at 5.15 p.m. (near Lesme Chocolate Factory), when a car conveying five youths stopped near by. Four youths stepped out and attacked me.

It seems that the cowardly racials are determined to prove their "bravery" by attacking and assaulting coloured ladies. It does not matter whether the coloureds are settlers or tourists!

Mrs. Asmahan Mahyoob Hassan,  
London NW10.

*Dear Race Today,*

On Friday, 25th June 1976, at around 10 a.m. I was waiting at a bus stop in Trafalgar Square. A group of about fourteen white hooligans passed by and I was savagely attacked by six of them. As I was completely taken by surprise, I was not able to defend myself. I was beaten badly and started bleeding, while the other passengers at the bus stop and passers-by just watched. As soon as I got home, I reported the incident to the police (within an hour and a half of the attack).

I was called to the Bow Street police station to give a formal statement on Monday, 28th June. After giving the statement, I was told that this was an "ordinary attack" and that it was "nothing special". The police further stated that as "there are no visible cuts or stitches" they could not do anything.

As a result of that attack, I started passing blood; and now, after remaining for a week in the hospital, I am undergoing an operation. If the police are looking for "stitches" and "cuts" to invoke the English law, they do exist now. Or does one of those sections or sub-sections of the law say that it is rather too late?

Rashid Ashur,  
Mile End Road,  
London E.1.

### 'UNITE AND FIGHT'

*Dear Race Today,*

On behalf of the West Middlesex District of the Communist Party, I would like to comment on your article in the June issue of *Race Today*, titled 'Southall: New Passions, New Forces.'

Your description of events following the killing of young Gurdip Chaggar is broadly correct, but then your accuracy seems to be replaced by wild and counter-productive criticisms of Southall's progressive organisations.

The intention of calling a united, anti-racist demonstration, involving the trade unions, churches, political parties and Asian organisations, was to effectively re-

but racialism and express mutual solidarity. Despite difficulties of shortage of time and initial differences of opinion, we succeeded in mobilising over 7,000 Southall people on the march. It was an outstanding success and something that *Race Today* should have applauded.

All sections, including the Asian youth, discussed and agreed to support the demonstration and its theme of unity against the racists.

There was no attempt by our party or anyone else to dominate the speakers for the march as you wrongly suggest. Nor should you ridicule the fact that a key local Trade Union leader (Brother Roger Butler, AUEW Southall District Secretary), who happens to be white, spoke at the end of the march. On behalf of the organisers, he called for united opposition to racists and fascists, in the interests of all workers in Southall.

With respect, instead of stressing the obvious and largely justified disenchantment of Asian youth with the IWA leaders, why not encourage support for the newly formed Southall Committee Against Racialism. It is officially supported by the local Asian youth as well as the other bodies involved in the march.

SCAR intends to organise mass anti-racist campaigns, legal aid and inter community events. The aim must be to root out racist ideas and promote unity of the working people. This we intend to do, realising only a sustained campaign can bring results and check the racist tide.

It appears to us that we must act in unity to challenge discrimination and racist immigration laws. We must, in unity, demand equal rights and opportunities for all. We must, in unity, call on the Government to outlaw racial incitement and such fascist bodies as the National Front and National Party.

Finally, whilst we recognise the value of fraternal criticism, we also feel the urgent need to unite the Left, labour movement and other anti-racist forces to stand with black workers against racism. All publications like *Race Today* have a real responsibility to help develop such unity.

Bob Allen,  
District Secretary,  
West Middlesex Communist Party(GB).

## CONGRATULATIONS

*Dear Race Today,*

I am very happy to read your magazine *Race Today*. I just got a chance to see it today, on the 4th July demonstration in Hyde Park against racism. It is really a great service to wake up the black people as well as the whole working class (black and white). I am an Indian man, and interested to know more about racism. If you do not mind, can you let me know about your organisation and its future events so that I can take part in them? I shall be very thankful to you for this.

With good wishes,

J. Kumar,  
Dagenham,  
Essex.

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PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS  
IS THE JULY AND AUGUST  
ISSUE. [Vol. 8 Nos. 7 & 8.]

## INDIAN MILITANT JAILED

*Dear Race Today,*

I picked up today's paper to see the bad news that George Fernandes, the leading militant of the Indian Railway Workers' Union, had been arrested in Calcutta, in connection with his role in the struggle against the fascist Indira Gandhi.

I remember your excellent cover article on the 1974 strike. Do you know what efforts are being made to defend Fernandes — and to get down to brass tacks, the address of a defence committee, contact, or the union, to which donations towards his defence can be made?

Coverage of Indian news isn't the greatest out here. Anything more on the continuing treachery of those 'class traitors,' the Indian Communist Party?

Shelby Shapiro,  
Agana, Guam.



# EDITORIAL

There is a world of difference between expressing an attitude of hostility to what police officers get up to in the black community and organising a movement to do something about it.

What we in the West Indian community have established beyond any doubt is the attitude that we are not going to allow police officers to do as they please without offering a full-blooded resistance.

In this issue of *Race Today* we have outlined the forms this resistance has taken to date. We have attempted to show from which sections of our community the major resistance has come and why. And we concluded by offering an example of an attempt to take that resistance further along the road. In so doing we aim to assist the process which transforms or changes a general attitude of hostility into an organised political movement.

We have been able, in the past few months, to make some judgements on the depth of this general attitude of hostility.

The propaganda machine at Scotland Yard has willed us to believe that, apart from a few trouble makers, everything was going smoothly. The West Indian community is a law abiding community, said Commander Marshall of Scotland Yard, and apart from a few people who make trouble with the police, the community is well disposed towards his officers.

It was to this law abiding section that Scotland Yard directed its £25,000 advertising campaign for black recruits into the Metropolitan police force. The campaign was supported by a lengthy editorial in the widely read *West Indian World*. Advertisements blared from the radio, television and the national newspapers, with editorials and articles in support. The law abiding section offered not one single recruit at the end of it all. The Commissioner of police made this admission publicly.

For us in *Race Today*, the West Indian community had succeeded in turning the police campaign into one of the most powerful political statements we have made since we have been in this country. We were saying, in fact, that as a community we would take no part in assisting the white establishment in maintaining their law and their order over the rest of society.

It was a complete and total rejection and in itself indicates the depth of hostility that exists.

There is much that we have achieved with a combination of general hostility and resistance and a few organisational efforts here and there. Firstly, we have brought the issue to sections of the white population. In so doing we have, to a considerable extent, shattered the myth of the nice British bobby. After all, some whites could ignore the odd explosive incident, but when they were faced with a series of clashes between young blacks and the police, they were forced to conclude that something was wrong somewhere. Many are now convinced that the police are responsible.

And secondly, we know that much, if not all

of the conflict, has taken place within the West Indian community. Asians have, by and large, been observers of these events. Now that their communities have been under attack from whites, they have to deal with the experience that police officers, in these clashes, are favouring their attackers. As a result a protest movement against police malpractice is developing within the Asian community and their members have approached us in *Race Today* to discuss how they could benefit from the experiences of West Indians in their struggles against the police. It does not take an experienced observer to conclude that Asians have drawn strength from what West Indians have done so far.

We are now left with the task of organising our forces, in the words of the Black Parents Movement, "to get the police off our backs". That is our aim. Let us be clear, we are not advocating an assembly of dedicated political militants who will campaign on behalf of the rest, calling us out to demonstrate today, sending us back tomorrow. As an organisational method that has been tried, tested and seen to fail.

We are advocating and are prepared to participate in what is described as the mass organisation, based in those who are directly involved in the struggle. We offer no consciousness ruler by which to measure prospective membership. In this issue we have been specific about the sections involved — students, unemployed youth and parents. The mass organisation is theirs, they must be active in it and central to it. The organisation must be a vehicle for their experiences and their struggles. Nothing else will do.

We can provide reams of evidence that it is possible to launch such an organisation in every black community up and down the country. Our people are prepared to move. We are not saying that it will be easy. If that were the case then organisations of that kind would have already emerged by the score.

There are a lot of forces which corrupt and deform the process through which such an organisation emerges. In this issue we have itemised some of them. Those forces have to be fought within and without the organisation. They are easily identified. We offer this formula for discovering who they are. They invariably if not always cast us in the mould of victim, poor helpless demoralised victims. Some say victims of this or that ism, or of some generalised power structure. Others say that we are victims of our own inadequacies. Whatever the form, they always want us to join them with the promise that if we do then our problems are nearer solution. The police ask us to join as recruits. Others offer recruitment in political parties, some offer less official and less disciplined representation. In each case the song is the same 'come and join us and we will help you'.

We in the *Race Today* Collective are advocating the opposite — the mass organisation of unemployed youth, students and parents to fight this particular issue. We will continue, as we have been doing, to commit all our resources in this direction.



# UP AGAINST THE POLICE

**Chapeltown, Leeds, 5th November, 1975:**

Three hundred young blacks clash with Yorkshire police on the streets of the black community, Chapeltown. The youth are participating in the bonfire night celebrations, a tradition in Yorkshire which draws hundreds of young blacks and whites onto the streets. Bonfire night 1973 and 1974 recorded similar clashes.

Prior to the 1975 celebrations, local social workers and other community organisers in Chapeltown held a discussion with senior police officers. It was agreed that the police would stay out of the area. In policing terms the Leeds police would keep a low profile. Nothing of the sort took place. Shortly after 8 p.m. a convoy of police vehicles moves into Chapeltown. To date, no police officer has offered an explanation. During the next two hours control of the streets is hotly contested as fighting between young blacks and police rage on.



*Picket in support of the Railton 4 who appear on the opposite page.*

**Wood Green, London, 12th May, 1976:**

200 young blacks are leaving the North London inter-schools athletic finals held at the New River Sports Centre, Wood Green. Black athletes dominate the finals and draw support from fellow school mates and the unemployed black youth in that area. They are making their way along Perth Road, in the direction of Lordship Lane. Someone throws a tin-can in front of a police car, and within minutes police amass their forces to confront and arrest 'this dangerous criminal'. It means confronting the crowd of young blacks and the police are determined to do it. Fighting between the police and young blacks continue for the next half-hour.

**Railton Road, Brixton, London, 1st June, 1976:**

Railton Road is a heavily policed area. The Brixton end of the road is referred to among blacks in military terms as 'the Front Line'. It is the front line of defence against the police and the haunt of the black unemployed of Brixton. On Tuesday, June 1st, a sixty one year old West Indian, Mr Johnson, is shopping at the local Cash and Carry on Railton Road. He is stopped by police officers from the local station. They want to know whether he is the rightful owner of the goods he is carrying. Mr Johnson is reaching for his receipt but the officers are not satisfied. They must, it seems, exercise their force and authority on the front line. They push Mr Johnson around, jostling and assaulting him. Two young women and other black passers-by cannot tolerate the public humiliation of Mr Johnson. They intervene and they too are bullied and assaulted. A full scale confrontation is threatened as police reinforcements pour into the area. Close to one hundred blacks mount an angry protest.

**Moss Side, Manchester, 21st June, 1976:**

The Moss Side precinct is the local shopping centre. The black unemployed youth frequent the precinct's coffee bars and gather in front of the record shops. The local youth club, the Hideaway is a stone's throw away and young blacks move to and from the Hideaway to the precinct. The local police see it as their duty to disperse the youth. On 21st June, police officers accost 16 year old Joyce Ricketts. They claim to be searching for an air pistol. She is manhandled and assaulted by police officers in full view of passers-by. Another full-scale confrontation is threatened.

**Harlesden, London, 24th June, 1976:**

Groups of young blacks are leaving the Burning Spear Club in the early hours of Thursday morning. The area is surrounded by the local police. Two police cars block the alleyway which leads off from the club. On the High Street other police vehicles are parked, waiting. Apparently it is routine police activity. Police officers are seen to force a black youth into a police car. His sister protests. A group of young blacks return to the scene and join in the protest. Full-scale fighting breaks out. The police draw truncheons and launch an exercise in brutality and foul racist abuse.

These examples illustrate that sections of our community are, on an ever increasing scale, prepared to resist the actions of police officers on our home ground. This is how a senior police officer puts it



in his report to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Race Relations:

*"Recently there has been a growth in the tendency for members of London's West Indian communities to combine against police by interfering with police officers who are effecting the arrest of a black person or who are in some other way enforcing the law in situations which involve black people. In the last twelve months forty such incidents have been recorded. Each carries a potential for large scale disorder."*

It is not now merely a question of what police officers are doing to us. It is, at the same time, a massive resistance which has been growing in black communities as far afield as Leeds, Manchester, Harlesden, Brixton and Wood Green. In the last five years street fighting between young blacks and the

police has become common place in the black communities throughout Britain.

One, perhaps, two incidents may be dismissed as isolated incidents in an otherwise harmonious atmosphere. That is not the case here. We are faced today with a developing political movement of black people against the police and the movement is national in scope.

The nature of this movement has to be spelled out. We have to identify the sources from which it springs. We have to be clear about the forces involved in this movement and the nature of those forces ranged against us. We have to define what the movement wants and of the greatest importance, how we are going to achieve it. All these questions need not be fully answered at this stage, but a start has to be made. The time is now.



## UNEMPLOYED YOUTH & STUDENTS ARE THE TARGET

This political movement involves the entire community. Even so the struggles are centred around a particular section. It is clear that our unemployed youth and our school students are overwhelmingly represented in these confrontations with police officers.

In the five incidents quoted above there were 40 arrests — of the 40, 30 are either unemployed or students and all except two are between the ages of

15 and 25. In every incident the confrontation took place in those areas where unemployed and students gather in large numbers. A review of incidents going back to 1970 reveal the same pattern.

For sometime now the police have been able to isolate the unemployed and school students from the rest of us and for this reason. The unemployed and the students are our wageless. They do not work, and consequently are paid no wages. They may receive



small grants from the education authorities in the case of students and a pittance from the Social Security for the unemployed. In these circumstances many have received convictions in the courts for crimes which are directly linked to their wagelessness. The police have waved these convictions before the black community as a way of dividing the so called law abiding sections from the 'renegades'.

How many times have we heard from senior police officers that we are a law abiding community except for a few hardcore criminal elements? And for a time the police did succeed in enforcing that separation, between the hardcore unemployed and the rest of the community.

In recent months the situation has changed substantially. There is no longer just an isolated hardcore. They have been joined by thousands of school leavers who can't find jobs and thousands of young workers who have been thrown out of jobs they once held; all of whom are involved in the battle for survival without a wage. Those haunts out of which the hardcore survived have been swamped by increasing numbers of newcomers.

New haunts have been created. Literally, droves of school leavers have gone into further education to escape the wagelessness of the unemployed. They receive small grants, free meals and warmth in the winter months. Some pursue one perhaps two O'levels, others take up the rather vague and meaningless General Studies course which prepares them for very little. The Common Room of these colleges are jam-packed with their unemployed friends who come to share the warmth, a free meal and perhaps some of that grant money in the card and domino games.

Youth projects financed by grants from Urban Aid and the Community Relations Commission have increased enormously in the last two years. Supervised by two perhaps three youth leaders, young blacks gather daily at these projects to while the hours away.

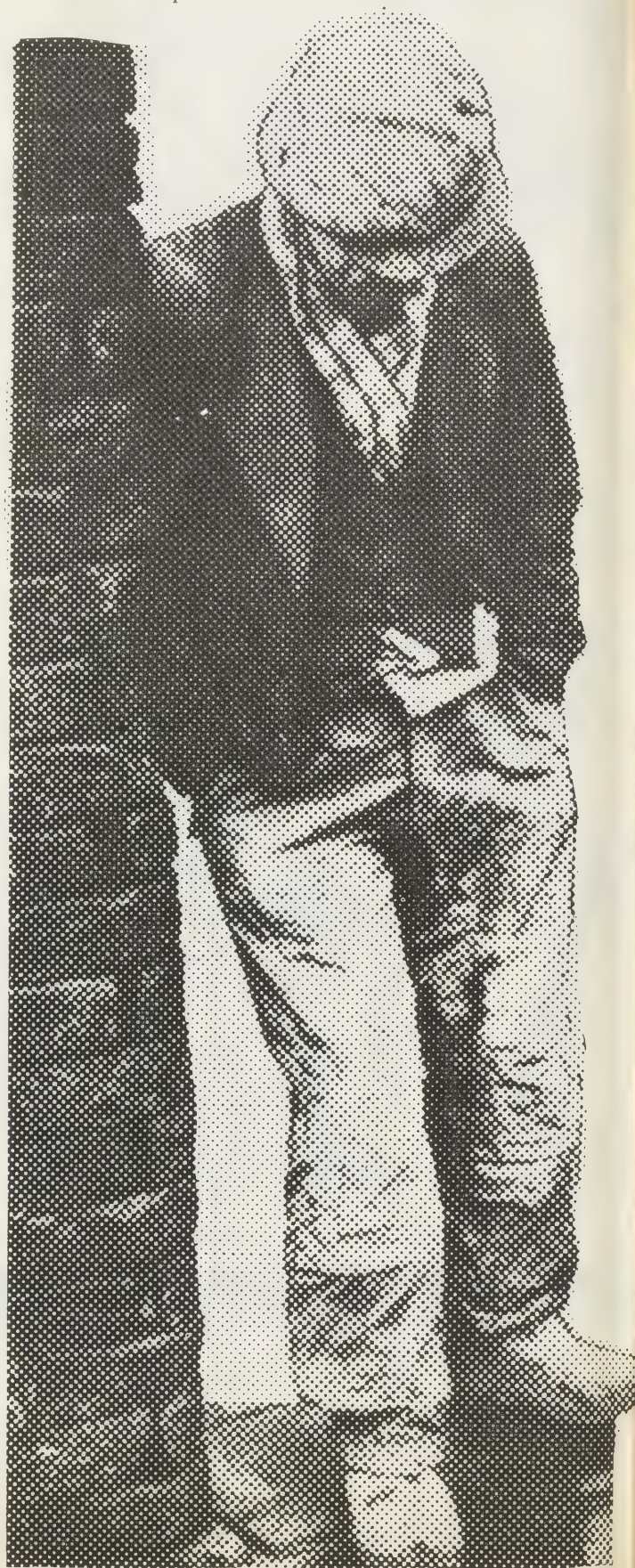
It is within these haunts that experiences received at the hands of police officers circulate, and attitudes of resistance are formed. Concentrated in large numbers, these young blacks begin to feel a sense of their own strength and power.

We are not describing an exclusively male world either. Of the 40 arrested 15 are women.

This growing army of young men and women are linked together in one struggle. It is the struggle to survive without a wage. Some are taking the fight to the local Social Security offices for benefits due to them. Black student groups have been formed at colleges of further education and it won't be long before the issue of grants is taken up. Those who do not live at home must wage a struggle for a roof over their heads. Many of them take over council property and squat within. Whatever the areas identified the struggles grow in intensity by the day.

A traditional view of unemployed workers exists. They are supposed to be demoralised victims who trot from factory to factory, work place to work place begging the high and mighty employer for jobs. For such victims, 'Right to Work' campaigns are organised by political militants who hatch recipes in their organisational closets.

Among young blacks that type is dead and possibilities of resurrection are remote. Isolated and demoralised they are not. Society either responds to their needs or something has got to give. That sums up their attitude. It is a movement of resistance, one which police officers instinctively attack. Therein lies the basis for the on-going war between young blacks and the police.



*Photo from Right to Work Campaign Poster.*



# CASES TO REMEMBER

1970 August Mangrove 9

**Charges:** Riot and Affray. **Result:** 5 acquitted on all charges. 2 found guilty of affray and assault on police. 2 found guilty of assault on police.

*25 arrested after a demonstration protesting the police harassment of the Mangrove restaurant. Fighting broke out between young blacks and the police.*

1971 May Metro 4

**Charges:** Affray, Assault on Police, Wounding with Intent and Possession of Offensive Weapon. **Result:** Not guilty.

*Fighting erupted between young blacks and the police after the police attempted to invade the Metro Club in Notting Hill Gate.*

1972 March Oval 4

**Charges:** Attempted Theft and Assault on Police. **Result:** Found guilty, released on appeal. 4 arrested by the then notorious transport police led by Sgt. Ridgewell, whilst leaving Oval Tube Station.

1973 June Brockwell Park 3

**Charges:** Affray and Assault on Police, Possession of Offensive Weapon. **Result:** Guilty, 1 released on appeal.

*3 picked on at random by the police in a running battle between police and black youth at the Brockwell Park fair.*

1974 April Cliff McDaniel

**Charges:** Assault on Police, Insulting Behaviour. **Result:** Guilty, acquitted on appeal.

*Schoolboy arrested in his lunch-break on his way back to school.*

August Clapton Park 4

**Charges:** Assault on Police, Assault on a Teacher. **Result:** Guilty of Assault on Police.

*Schoolgirls arrested after the headmistress of Clapton Park School called the police into the school. Fighting broke out between girls and the police officers.*

September Swan Disco 7

**Charges:** Affray, Assault on Police, Possession of Offensive Weapon. **Result:** 3 found guilty, 4 acquitted.

*Police invasion of the Swan Disco Club in Stockwell, South London, resulting in a running battle between black youth and the police.*

October Cricklewood 12

**Charges:** Affray, Possession of Offensive Weapon, Threatening Behaviour, Assault on Police, Wounding with Intent to Cause GBH. **Result:** 10 acquitted, 2 convicted and subsequently released on appeal.

*Police invasion of the Carib Club, in Harlesden, North London. Fighting lasted for an hour.*

Stockwell 10

**Charges:** Affray, Possession of Offensive Weapons, Threatening Behaviour, Assault on Police. **Result:** 9 Not guilty, 1 conviction of Possession of Offensive Weapon.

*All arrested at Stockwell Tube Station, whilst returning home from the Caxton Hall Disco, in South London. The police falsified the signal which made passengers get off the train. They picked up youths at random. Again extensive fighting took place.*

1975 July Desmond Wilson

**Charge:** Murder of PC Green. **Result:** Guilty, sentenced to life imprisonment.

*PC Green was well-known by the youths who frequented the Rainbow Rooms Club, in Birmingham. He was stabbed outside the club, after harassing the youths as they entered.*

Dallow Road 7

**Charges:** Threatening Behaviour, Assault on Police. **Result:** Guilty.

*Youths intervened to assist one of their number, a 15 year old girl, after police arrested and brutalised her.*



# HOW THE POLICE OPERATE

What then are the experiences of young blacks at the hands of police officers?

If we could attribute a general strategy to the police then it can be described as harass, attack and disperse. The Chapeltown, Leeds incident is a case in point. In his evidence a police officer describes what he observed from a point some 300 yards away from the bonfire incident.

*"I saw a crowd of 200 youths and they looked threatening."*

*"What were they doing?"* asked counsel for the defence.

*"Standing around a bonfire lighting fire crackers",* came the reply.

A threatening crowd has to be dispersed and 20 minutes later a convoy of police vehicles drive through the crowd. All hell breaks loose.

Again in Wood Green, a crowd of 200 leave the sports center at the end of the athletics final. A tin can is thrown in front of a police car. No damage results. A childish prank if ever there was one. Yet scores of police officers amass at the end of the street and challenge the crowd. Again all hell breaks loose.

It is a recurring story of truncheons drawn, excessive brutality and racist abuse.

Arrests are made on the spot. Charges include *threatening behaviour, possession of offensive weapons, varying assaults on police*. Defendants appear in court on the following day and the matter is postponed. The investigating officer in charge of the case collects statements from police officers who were at the scene. Statements are made up from notes made by police officers in their note-books. Notes are invariably made up in the police canteen where officers compare their entries. Frame-ups are hatched at this point.

*"When I arrested the defendant he shouted, kill the fucking pigs."*

*"When charges were read to him the defendant said, it is time black people stand up and fight."*

*"I saw the defendant instructing others to throw stones"*.

In some cases defendants are beaten into making

statements. The Leeds police have a record in this respect. They asked a jury to believe in the bonfire night trial that ten of the eleven defendants made statements of their own free will, admitting more than 50 offences.

Once the investigating officer compiles these statements he visits the area around which the incident took place. He is interviewing the residents. They are invariably all white. He puts the one question to all of them. *"Were you scared when you saw all this fighting."*

Back comes the reply, *"of course I was"*.

The case papers are then sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions whose task it is to review the evidence and advise on charges. Once the legal officer reads the evidence of civilian witnesses — I was scared — he knows what the police are asking him to do.

He advises that charges of *affray* be returned against all defendants. There has been a rush of *affrays* against young blacks in the last five years. There is no maximum on the term of imprisonment for an *affray* charge.

Wherever the charge of *affray* is preferred, it is as a result of a massive attack launched against black youths in those places where youths gather — The Metro Youth Club, The Carib Club, The Swan Disco, Bonfire night, Wood Green, The Caxton Hall Disco, Brockwell Park.

We have recorded the group situations but then these do not exhaust the experiences. Resistance in these incidents is based in the experiences of countless individual cases. In these individual cases the war against the unemployed is clearly in evidence.

For the police any one who is wageless is a thief or about to steal. Two or three youths are walking down the street or standing at a bus stop. The police swoop and arrest them. The charges — *loitering with intent to steal, attempting to steal from person or persons unknown*. There is, in most cases, some resistance which leads to an additional charge of *assault on police*.

Again, the police make up their notes in the canteen. The attempted or the intended theft is in all cases from a woman's hand bag. The woman is described in detail and everytime the police are unable to bring the woman to court. She always eludes them at that crucial moment. A conviction is guaranteed in the magistrates court.

There are literally hundreds of cases of this kind against young blacks throughout Britain.





**TEL WINS: HORNSEY POLICE DEFEATED**  
Ryan David Must Go

ST CO



The BPM is a growing and thriving organisation engaged in a fight together with the BSM, on issues that arise with students in schools and against what police officers are doing in North London. Presently, they are spearheading the fight for the freedom of the Wood Green 18.

Once the machinery of the law calls into existence the embryo organisations in different cases in any one black community, several elements operate to keep them apart and disperse them from within.

Defence committees of political militants spring up around the most dramatic of these cases, concentrating on the one and ignoring all others. Once that case ends these committees die a natural death. Parents are excluded or never even thought of, once the consciousness ruler is applied. Defendants too are excluded. In a recent meeting of a case committee, a community organiser asked that defendants leave the room when organisational matters were being discussed.

Cases are snatched from the embryo organisation and loaded onto advice centres who, like shop-keepers, treat with every client separately.

Once the elements with a direct interest in the struggle are dispersed, other interests take over. Left-organisations poach for members in their recruitment drives. Lawyers poach for clients, competing with each other for fame and fortune. The political organisations compete in the hope that the most dedicated would be rewarded with a few members. Community organisations compete for the lime-light in order to impress Urban Aid and the Community Relations Commission that they are in the thick of events.

All perspective on the general struggle is lost and chaos and defeat face the movement as a whole. This is the case even when a particular case ends in victory for the defendants. The battle is won but defeat is threatened in the general war.

Once the general struggle of the wageless, their parents and friends has revealed all established organs to be impotent in getting the police off our backs, the way is open for a new organisational thrust. The Black Parents and Students Movement have shown the way.

## Caribbean Dialogue

is an information service which reports and analyses news, trends and events throughout the Caribbean region and in Caribbean immigrant communities in metropolitan centres.

The latest issue is a special double issue on the political situation in Trinidad and Tobago.

**'At the Crossroads —**

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Europe.

Caribbean Dialogue is essential reading for those of you who are interested or involved in the political struggle in the Caribbean region and in Caribbean communities elsewhere.

## cold war in the tropical sun

The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants have published their comments on the Hawley Report.

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# CALL YOUR POLICE OFF OUR BACKS — BLACK PARENTS AND STUDENTS WARN THE HOME SECRETARY

*Dear Sir,*

As the government minister responsible for the actions of the police, we are again writing to you, this time about a serious incident which occurred at the North London Inter-Schools Sports held at the New River Sports Centre, Wood Green, N.22 on May 12, 1976.

Some two hundred young blacks, mostly school children, were on their way home after the North London Inter-Schools Sports. Using the excuse that a tin can was thrown in front of a passing police car, the police blew up the incident out of all proportion. They amassed their forces at Lordship Lane — panda cars, transit vans etc. — and mounted a clearly planned, violent attack against all the black youths in the vicinity.

They also abused the youth with vile racist insults, and we would like to confirm that such abuse and provocation are constant and common-place in their dealings with the black community.

To add insult to injury, the police have referred their papers to the Director of Public Prosecutions. This means that the police would like to introduce further charges of Riot and Affray at the forthcoming committal proceedings in October, later this year. And this is one of the tactics that the police have been using — in incidents which they themselves have created — since the Mangrove 9 case in

1970.

Almost a year ago, in April 1975, we brought the case of another black youth to your attention. We reported that he had been wrongly arrested on his way back to school; that he had been beaten up by officers of the Hornsey police in full view of witnesses; that the beatings continued in the Hornsey Police Station itself.

As is customary, you referred our complaint to that area of the bureaucracy which deals with complaints against the police; from which there finally emerged the pronouncement that there was no evidence to prosecute the officers involved. This, in spite of the fact that the Judge, who allowed our appeal against the youth's scandalous conviction, called for an investigation into the behaviour of the police officers concerned.

We demanded, quite reasonably we thought considering the outrage which the police behaviour had caused here and in other parts of London, that one of the officers — PC Ryan David Y650 — be removed from the police force. No satisfaction here either. PC Ryan David can still be seen patrolling the streets of this neighbourhood.

The black community's dissatisfaction and resentment at this kind of police behaviour and the offhand dismissal of our complaints, has not only been expressed through writing to you. Your Commission-

er of police recently issued a public invitation to the black community to join the police force and the reply was a resounding 'No'.

In March 1976, a senior Scotland Yard officer gave evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee to the effect that in the preceding twelve (12) months, forty (40) incidents were recorded in which groups of young blacks clashed with police officers. The attack at Lordship Lane is yet another incident of this kind.

In the face of all this, you Mr Home Secretary, have remained silent. Police officers it seems, have interpreted your silence as one of the many sources of strength they have at their disposal to continue their attacks on the black community.

We, the Black Parents Movement and the Black Students Movement, demand that you, Mr Home Secretary, call your police off our backs.

We also reserve the right to make this letter public at any time.

John La Rose,  
For and on behalf of  
Black Parents Movement.

Victor Sylvester,  
For and on behalf of  
Black Students Movement.

21st June, 1976.



# BRENT CALLS ON THE HOME SECRETARY TO INTERVENE

Dear Sir,

As the government minister responsible for the recruitment and actions of the Metropolitan Police Force, you will be aware that the conflict between black youth and the police at both local and national level, has escalated to alarming proportions.

We wish to draw your attention to the London Borough of Brent, in particular Harlesden, where the activities of the local police have incensed the black community.

On June 23rd, 1976, six (6) young black women, the youngest only fifteen (15) years old, who were returning home after an evening at the Burning Spear Club, were physically attacked and arrested by police officers from Harlesden Police station.

Our enclosed statement: "Brent Police Attack Black Women", describes in some detail the circumstances of the girls' arrest and the disgraceful manner in which these arrests were executed. Please note the disgusting racist abuse emanating from the mouths of your police officers and the fact that one of the girls became unconscious in the Harlesden Police Station as a result of the beating she received.

Inside Harlesden Police Station none of the girls was made aware of her rights. All were finger-printed and photographed. All objected but their objections went un-heeded. Although the law on police photographs still remains unclear, the NCCL has informed us that an arrested person does have the right to refuse. In the case of the minor, her parents were not informed of her arrest and she was photographed and finger-printed without their consent. She did inform the Station Sergeant that she is a minor but he refused to believe her and made no attempt to verify this.

Another aspect of this case that concerns us is the new guidelines for the granting of Legal Aid in cases where more

than one defendant is charged and no conflict of interest arises. These new guidelines clearly over-ride the principle of Legal Aid which is that a defendant should have a right to a solicitor of his/her choosing. Four (4) of the girls who submitted Legal Aid applications at Willesden Magistrates Court were initially denied the solicitor of their choice.

As your Ministry is also responsible for setting down the guidelines to Magistrates on the granting of Legal Aid, we want you to know that we regard as a serious matter the abrogation of the principle of a defendant's right to a solicitor of his/her choosing for the sake of saving Legal Aid costs. In this case we were able to fight the decision of the Willesden Magistrate, but there must be numerous cases where the choice of the defendant is overlooked and they are assigned solicitors in whom they have no trust or confidence.

In Brent, this case of the six (6) girls in Harlesden is but the latest in a lengthening series of police harassments and provocations which the black community has witnessed. On 11th October, 1974, police with dogs raided a club named the Carib Continental Club (also called Burtons) which is frequented by black youth. Some forty-two (42) young black men and women were detained that night and eleven (11) were picked out on an Identity Parade and charged with serious offences ranging from possession of offensive weapons to Affray. All have subsequently been acquitted. The brutality by police officers towards the black youth in that club, the absence of senior officers to supervise the hundreds of police that attended the scene that night and finally, the unsuccessful attempt to frame the twelve (12) defendants, one of whom was never even there, continue to anger the black community both locally and nationally.

More recently again, as the enclosed statement shows, a young black woman

was so badly beaten by police officers in the precincts of Harrow Magistrates Court on June 22nd, 1976, she had to be hospitalised.

Sir Robert Mark, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, speaking at a Press Conference last month on his Annual Report for 1975, claimed:

*"There is not a single section of the people of London who are more concerned to achieve a good relationship with the immigrant community than the police. Not one. Nobody at all . . . . ."*

And, Chief Superintendent Sadler, who recently took command of 'Q' Police Division which covers the Brent area, echoed the call of the Commissioner for blacks to come and join the Police Force. He said:

*"A lot of time and money was spent on the Campaign but we will continue to keep the lines of communication open for possible candidates from immigrant communities".*

In the face of daily harassment and molestation of the black community, particularly of black youth, such statements by Senior Police Officers are sheer hypocrisy. The black community nationally has shown, by its refusal to be seen in the ranks of the Police Force, a total lack of trust or confidence in it.

Recently, as Home Secretary, you have had much to say in rebuking the National Front for such activity as provoking riots and violence against Britain's black community. Why is it then, that on the equally serious questions of police provocation, racism and physical violence against the black community, you have said nothing at all.

Your public intervention in this matter is long over-due.

Brent Defence Committee.



# BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

"Above all, we should pay tribute to the way in which British people, with enormous tolerance and friendship in the overwhelming majority of cases, have accepted into their midst a large number of people of an alien race, culture and religion.

It would be very dangerous to trespass too far on that tolerance and generosity, but I fear that we are in danger of doing that. It would be equally foolish to pretend that, even with the difficulties we have on our plate today, they do not present a grave problem: they do, indeed.

First, we cannot fail to recognise the deep bitterness that exists among ordinary people who one day were living in Lancashire and woke up the next day in New Delhi, Calcutta, or Kingston, Jamaica."

**W. Churchill (Stretford).**

"The title of this debate is somewhat misleading because we are talking not about immigration as such but about coloured immigration. During the past three years, over 30,000 people from the Common Market nations have entered this country and have been absorbed into the community without any great problem, as they blend with the rest of us because they have no colour which distinguishes them. The difficulties revolve around the colour of people's skins. We should bear that in mind and recognise the problem, not avoid it."

**George Rodgers (Chorley).**

"We all know that according to gossip and rumour, a coloured person has only to show his face at a Department of Health and Social Security Office to be instantly showered with untold wealth which he invests in several colour television sets and a variety of motor cars. Many of the tales are so ludicrous that they would be laughable, except that they have become so widely accepted. They are not sufficiently challenged. Again, we here have a duty to expose such nonsense."

**George Rodgers (Chorley).**

"If a petition is put forward to the Home Office, it takes six to eight weeks to get a reply. If an Asian leader or an immigrant leader wants to see the Prime Minister or the Home Secretary, he will be seen in two days."

**John Stokes (Halesowen and Stourbridge).**

"In my constituency, the area with the worst housing has very few people of immigrant descent. Not many are black or brown. The housing is rotten and has been terrible for 30 or 40 years. It predates in its horror the entry of immigrants in the fifties and sixties in response to economic needs and market forces in this country. These two things tend to be coupled together — the difficulties that this country is experiencing, and the anxieties within this community about a

certain sort of immigrant community.

**Philip Whitehead (Derby North).**

"We must be honest — the difficulty arises from coloured immigration. Let there be no beating about the bush. The average coloured immigrant has a different culture, a different religion and a differ-

## HOW MPs VIEW BLACKS

Members of Parliament debated the issue of Race and Immigration at the House of Commons on Monday, 5th July. Here, we reproduce extracts from some of their speeches.



ent language. That is what creates the problem. It is not just because of race. The people in our cities feel strongly about immigrants. I believe that a preference for one's own race is as natural as a preference for one's own family. Therefore it is not racialism, if by that one means, as I do, an active hostility to another race."

**Ivor Stanbrook (Orpington).**

"My sympathies lie with those [whites] in areas of high immigration, in the terraced houses of Wolverhampton, Bradford and Southall, who suddenly found the whole area in which they live completely changed. They now find that because they have not enough money they cannot get out and start a new life elsewhere. They have to go on living in an area which they find more and more difficult."

**Fergus Montgomery (Altrincham and Sale).**

"Incidentally, neither they [whites] nor the immigrants truly want integration. They never imagined 25 years ago, that their lives would be turned upside down and their neighbourhoods utterly changed almost beyond recognition. If anyone had said a generation ago that one-third of the population of some of the big British cities would be black by the end of the century, he would have been considered a lunatic, but that is the prospect that faces us."

**John Stokes (Halesowen and Stourbridge).**

"Many immigrants belong to the Muslim religion which allows up to four wives. I do not think that we ought to allow that here. If people wish to come and live in this land, let them abide by the laws of this land. It is perfectly true that no pension is paid to four widows of one man. It is perfectly true that allowances for income tax are not granted in respect of more than one dependent wife, but the dependent wives can get a dependent relative's allowance. Maternity allowances and child allowances are paid as well. I am worried about the implications of the polygamy problem in Britain today."

**Jill Knight (Birmingham, Edgbaston).**

"Both history and experience in other countries teach us that the divide gets wider and is invariably never bridged. What white Englishman will be prepared to integrate with an Asian Muslim? Very few. He may work with him and treat him with due regard and respect, abiding by the letter of the race relations legislation, but that is not my definition of integration. We can never pretend that an Asian Muslim is exactly the same as an Anglo-Saxon. That is a total impossibility. The parallel of the impossibility of Arab and Jew integration should teach us a lesson.

**Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield).**



# WE CAN FIGHT FOR BETTER HOUSING — AND WIN

Two documents on the housing conditions of blacks have been published in the last few days. The first is a Community Relations Commission publication titled 'Housing in Multi-Racial Areas.' It is a report compiled by office wallahs. They are the housing directors in those areas where there are sizeable black communities. They are paid executives, not elected councillors. They serve any party in power at the local council — Labour, Liberal, Conservative, or even the National Front.

The other document is a different kettle of fish. It comes in the form of a speech delivered by Mr Tony Judge, Chairman of the Greater London Council's Housing Management Committee. Tony Judge is a politician responsible for shaping policy and programme which the office wallahs are paid to carry out. He is a Labour councillor, and in his position as Chairman of the Housing Management Committee, he is Britain's biggest landlord, with 200,000 houses or flats throughout London. He delivered his speech to the 14th Annual Conference of the National Voluntary Housing Conference organised by Shelter, the voluntary housing body which lobbies politicians for decent housing for all.

We in *Race Today* are particularly concerned with the contents of both documents. It is important to know and grasp what the opposition is saying and why. Our organisation is directly involved in the struggle for decent housing for blacks.

Both documents admit to the following facts:

Only 4% of Asians are in council housing.  
50% of all homeless families in substandard emergency housing are black.

52% of Asians in Tower Hamlets who applied for council housing were found 'not eligible'. They could not, it is said, meet the council's residential qualifications.

34% of West Indian households and 41% of Asians have been allocated housing in which they are technically 'overcrowded', as compared with 11% of the white population.

There is a high concentration of black families in the worst estates the state owns.

In a well-orchestrated public show of humility, Judge asks, who is to blame for these conditions? "It [the blame] lies with us, the politicians", he replies. And he is now determined to do something about it.

We need to pose this question. Is Mr Judge struck by a sudden urge to do good for blacks?

Firstly, Tony Judge's GLC has recently taken a public thrashing. The Runnymede Trust, a voluntary body, produced a well-researched document which accused the GLC of racial discrimination in the allocation of housing. Secondly, an internal report

produced by GLC researchers confirmed Runnymede's conclusions. We know for a fact that there were elements within the GLC who attempted to suppress the internal report. Sections of the last report were leaked to us in case those elements for suppression triumphed. In the face of these developments Judge had to make a public statement. Try as he might he could not avoid the admission that all was not well on the black front.

The housing directors, in the CRC report, accept too that we blacks are not getting what is due to us. They recommend a series of administrative measures — better communication, more black housing officers, more precise statistics etc. etc. Not much there. Administrators recommend administrative solutions.

It is Judge, with his well-orchestrated campaign, that we are concerned about. We met Mr Judge before. With a picket outside his offices, a delegation from the Bengali Housing Action Group and *Race Today* discussed with him the housing needs of Asian workers in the East End of London. We raised the issue of evictions threatened by the GLC against homeless Asian workers who have occupied GLC properties.

Will the GLC rehouse these workers?

"No", said Judge, "we give no such commitment."

Again in the speech he stresses the need for facilitating families in the transfer system. We know that the GLC's files are thick with the cases we have personally sent them demanding the transfer of families from housing in which they are attacked, besieged, abused and demoralised. To date the GLC has not acted in one single case.

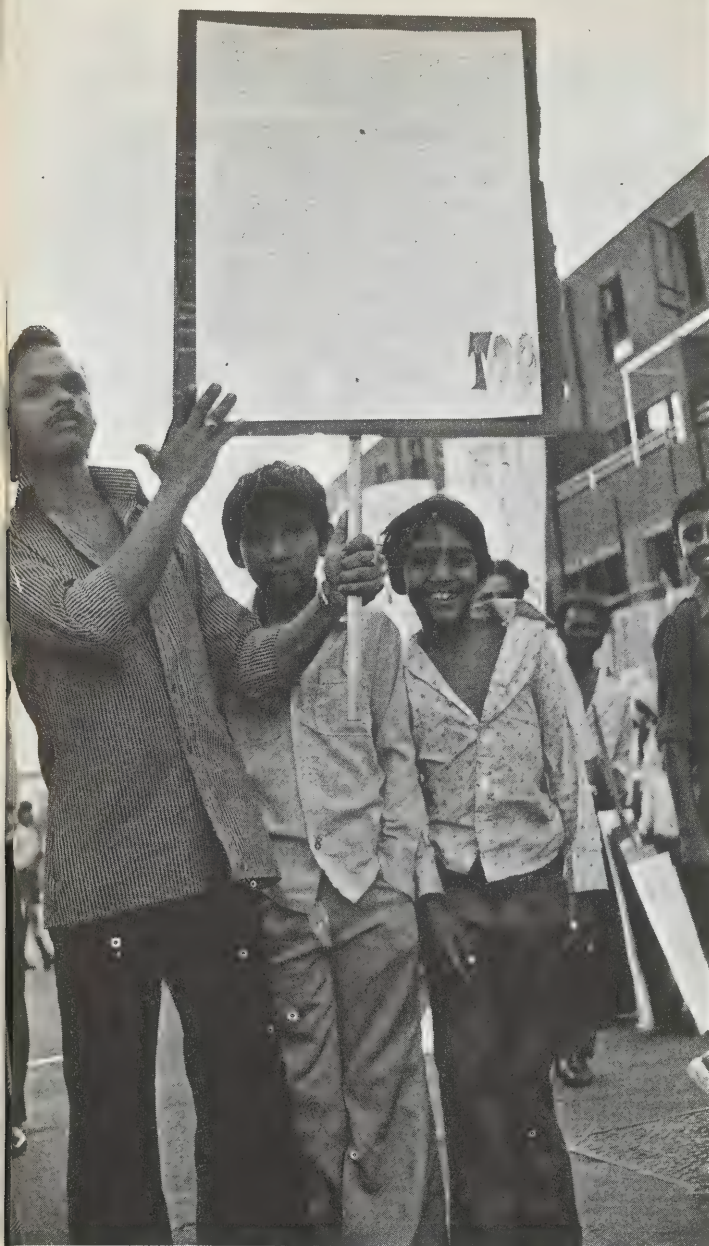
In the face of such negligence we cannot believe Mr Judge when he says "having now recognised the problems, our policies and our practical implementation of those policies will in future be sure and firm."

Does that mean that the GLC will give immediate transfers to black families in areas of their choice? Families who are repeatedly beaten and robbed and spat upon on majority-white estates? We doubt it. We know verbiage when we see it.

Some more from Judge: "It is easy to say one believes in equal opportunity for minority groups. It is a totally different matter to implement that policy and make it work". *He should know.*

Any improvement that blacks get from the GLC and local councils must be fought for and won. The organisation which leads that fight will be based in housing estates. Large concentrations of blacks on any estate will make for strong organisation. No doubt Mr Judge is aware of this. In looking at a 10% concentration of West Indians and Asians on some of his estates, he recommends dispersal.





## FORCING THE COUNCIL TO NEGOTIATE

The Bengali Housing Action Group, (BHAG) wrote sixteen letters to councillors on the Tower Hamlets Borough Council. We were saying to them that we Asian workers, who are their constituents, are not getting our dues in the field of housing. We pay our taxes, we pay our rates but the council housing authorities, in allocating homes to workers in the borough, have done little to satisfy the needs of Asian workers. We demanded that they meet a delegation from our organisation, BHAG, to hear our protests

and of greater importance, that they do something about them.

We got one reply to our letters — “we don’t talk to groups such as yours”. We would not let the matter rest there. We decided to let the councillors know that we are a force, one that they must recognise. We took a decision to call a demonstration. Our membership responded. 300 men, women and children marched to the Town Hall on the evening of June 30th. On that day councillors on the Housing Committee were meeting. We sat in the street outside the Town Hall. A delegation from BHAG entered the building to deliver our demands. We would remain sitting on the street until they agreed to meet us.

The delegation was given the responsibility by the membership to negotiate the following demands:

1. a change in the housing policy which made 53% of the Asians applying for council housing ineligible last year;
2. an investigation into the widespread racketeering in the ‘sale’ and ‘lease’ of council-owned ‘squats’ in the Borough;
3. negotiation on a policy for short life property for Asians, with a guarantee of rehousing for the homeless in areas of their choice and especially in areas of Asian concentration free from racist attacks;
4. a nomination of certain member families to the Greater London Council’s housing list.

After 20 minutes the delegation informed us that we had won. The councillors would meet us on a date to be fixed. Since that date, we have had a letter from the council authorities saying that our delegation would meet a group of councillors on August 2nd.

It was not an ordinary demonstration. In the climate of racial assaults against us, we were aware that we had to organise the demonstration with some care. We could not allow our membership to leave their homes to make their way to a central point, not with women and children involved. They might be attacked on the way. We could not allow our members to make their own way home after the demonstration, for the same reason.

Organising the protest was almost a military operation. We arranged a fleet of cars to pick up our members from their homes to take them to a central point — the local park. Our stewards, who are disciplined in the patrols which protect the community in these critical times, provided protection in the park and on the march to the Town Hall. The fleet of cars was on hand to take our members home at the end of the demonstration. We informed the local police, but after recent experiences with the Bethnal Green Police Station, we were not sure that we would be given adequate protection. We were right. While we were sitting in the middle of the road outside the Town Hall, a police officer egged on a white driver to drive his car through the demonstrators. The car emerged with some damage. The demonstration ended only when our members were back to the safety of the area surrounding Brick Lane and Commercial Road.



# HOUSE US WHERE WE ARE MANY

Mr Maklis Ali, his wife and four children have lived in the East End of London for several years. He owns the Jola Tia Store in Hessel Street and the family lives in the two rooms above the ramshackle store front. Six months ago the shops and houses of Hessel Street fell under the hammer of a compulsory purchase order and the tenants and occupants were ordered out.

The Greater London Council offered Mr Maklis Ali the 'choice' of a flat in Cuttle Close, one of the worst slums east of Aldgate. He refused. They then offered him equally decrepit accommodation in Shipwright House in Poplar, an area and neighbourhood notorious for assaults on Asian families. Mr Maklis Ali says he had heard enough about these assaults to stand firm in his refusal to be drafted there.

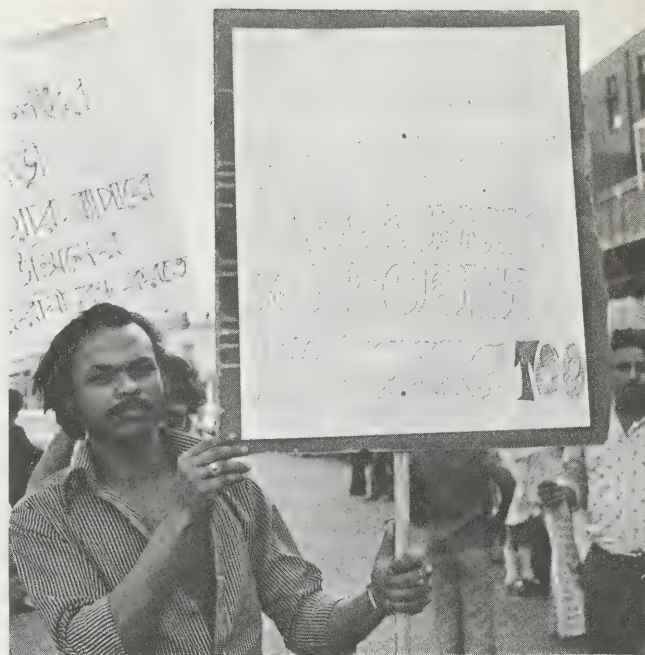
On Wednesday the 7th, the GLC proposed that Mr Ali go with a lady official of theirs to view a flat at Mountmorres Estate, 35 Westport Street, which they had allocated to his family. What the GLC neglected to tell Mr Ali was that this relatively new estate was segregated racially. There were no Asian families in it. As Mr Ali and the official climbed the stairs to the second floor, the neighbours emerged to stare. That was Wednesday.

On Sunday afternoon Mr Ali arrived in a van with his furniture and one friend. His way to the second floor was barred by several women who emerged from their flats on seeing him. The women were joined by white men wielding sticks and iron bars. "We don't want no Pakis here", they said. On the door of Mr Ali's flat was painted a sign: "No Pakis Here, Vote For NF".

The mob became larger as the women screamed abuse. "You're not going to live here. Fuck off somewhere else. This is an all white estate." One of the men grabbed Mr Ali's furniture and threatened to throw it over the balcony. Mr Ali called the police.

The police told Mr Ali that they couldn't get him into his flat. Mob rule must prevail. The law may have awarded him his rights, but the state would not enforce them. They advised him to go away and come back the next day Monday at ten in the morning, when they would call GLC officials to the spot to "sort this out."

The word had circulated round the estate, and the segregators were waiting. No GLC official turned up. There were no police in sight. Mr Ali left Westport Street because he said he felt that the mob would kill him if he forced his way past them to his flat. He called the Bengali Housing Action Group. Together with members of the group he went to the



Roy Cornwall



Roy Cornwall

GLC's offices in Aldgate. Yes, they had been informed. No, they couldn't do anything about it, but they would find him another flat in an area with a lot of Asian families. They also told him that if he could find a four bedroom GLC property he would like to occupy, he could have it.

For the first time the GLC, to cover its failure of nerve, has acknowledged a fact of life in the East End which *Race Today* and the Bengali Housing Action Group have been urging on it for two years. In the case of Mr Maklis Ali, and in the story of Mr Matasin Ali's family which we are about to tell the police and the GLC stand condemned of complicity in the working out of British apartheid. Did they have an option? Yes, they did. The initial racial segregation of new and sound properties belonging to the state gave the National Front its issue and its organising base. In no society, under no government, are the police mere observers of events. They have a duty to





Roy Cornwall

## ANOTHER EXAMPLE

On the night of the fourteenth of July, a gang of white youths gathered outside the home of Mr Matasin Ali in Hollybush House, Hollybush Gardens, E.3. Mr Ali his wife and five children have lived at that address for twelve weeks. They are GLC tenants, nominated to the GLC list after years of living in rack-rented, or squatted slum accommodation, or in short-life housing provided by the Borough of Tower Hamlets.

For two weeks after they settled in, there were no incidents. Then, at the time of the racist campaign in the local and national press the concerted harassment began. The anti-Asian gangs on the estate would bang on the windows, urinate on the door of the flat, throw their washing off the line into the garbage bins, and issue threats of burning the family out of their flat and killing them if they didn't

leave: The fifteen year old son of the family, Lilu Miah, was set upon, beaten and cut with a knife several times. The family's visitors were not allowed on to the estate and eventually stopped coming.

Complaints of all this were made to Bethnal Green police station, three minutes walk from Hollybush Gardens, but with no response. On the night of 14th July, a gang of youths gathered on either side of the building and began hurling chunks of concrete through the windows front and back. The other tenants watched. The family who have no phone, terrified, gathered themselves in the centre room till the barrage of stones and threats stopped. Eventually at five in the morning, Mr Ali made his way out of the flat and went to Bethnal Green police station. The police said they were "too busy". Mr Matasin Ali then went in desperation to the Bengali Housing Action Group. BHAG phoned the police station again at 10.30 in the morning. Again no response.

That evening, five members of BHAG drove with Mr Ali onto the estate. We informed the police that we were evacuating the family. The police replied that they were "busy with a burglary". A member of BHAG let them know that we would pick up our own support to carry out the removal and defend ourselves while doing it. "We'll have you for intimidation", was the reply of the desk-sergeant.

With fifteen more supporters called in, Mr Ali's family was moved to the flat of a friend. As the furniture was being moved, two West Indian women came to Mr Ali's door. They offered neighbourly support. "You shouldn't run away dear. You should have put on a kettle of water and thrown it boiling in their faces". An expression of support, but too little and too late. The Ali's wanted to be anywhere but there.

see that a family is not debarred from a door to which it has a legal claim. They have a duty to mount a protective guard on any family whose lives are openly threatened. They have a duty to arrest and prosecute those who intimidate the innocent.

The Asian community too has an option. It has the tactical choice, practicable today in the climate of organisation in the East End, to mount its own guard and fight its battles when challenged. And it has the responsibility of choosing its own terrain.

In the case of Mr Matasin Ali, who asked the police for help and got none, the Bengali Housing Action Group decided to move his family to safety and fight the GLC for the family's right to surrender their isolation and be housed in an area of Asian strength.

BHAG demands that the GLC accept the facts of segregationist assaults in the East End, and house Asian families in Asian dominated communities.



## COMPULSORY STERILISATION

### Indian Government Eliminates Non-Producers



Under the regime of Indira Gandhi, India becomes the first state in the world to subject its population to forcible sterilisation as a means of controlling births. Four Indian states — Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and West Bengal — have drafted legislation calling for the compulsory sterilisation of particular sections of the population. By the end of August, they are to announce their decision. In Maharashtra, the proposed legislation stipulates a two year prison sentence (in addition to forcible sterilisation) for anyone who resists sterilisation after the birth of his or her third child.

The proposed laws will not introduce compulsion into the country's birth control programme. They will merely legalise what has been a reality for some years. If passed, they will give final sanction to what the Ministry and other agencies of birth control have been doing under the guise of a 'voluntary' programme.

Over the last year alone, 2,650,000 people have been sterilised. These are 'official' figures. No others are available, since the national press is forbidden by the censors to 'comment' on the sterilisation programme. In April this year, the editors of three Urdu weeklies were arrested under section 36 of the Defence of Indian Rules for writing "objectionable matter". Their editorials criticised public speeches given at the time by Congress leaders. As a result, all three were refused bail and remanded in custody. The only information allowed on the issue is that put out by *Samachar*, the government controlled national news agency. All editors have been warned that 'anti-national elements' and 'rumour mongers' will be dealt with severely.

From its inception, the family planning programme in India has been actively resisted by the people at whom it is directed. It is only through a combination of bribes (the handing out of transistor radios, plastic buckets etc), economic pressures (the withdrawal of ration cards, refusal of housing loans etc.) and physical force, that the government has been able to implement the sterilisation programme. In India today, a sterilisation certificate has become a kind of passport to survival. In the face of increasing pressure and after a series of mass round-ups for the sterilisation camps, resistance to the

programme has also intensified.

In the last week of April, this year, a crowd of over 3000 people surrounded and destroyed a family planning clinic at Turkman Gate, in Old Delhi. They were mostly low-paid workers and the unemployed from a muslim ghetto, who stoned family planning officials and the police, burnt the clinic down, and also set fire to a building adjoining the police station. As part of its campaign to 'clean up the city', the government had decided to demolish their slum-homes and move them onto the outskirts of the city. That morning, officials had informed people in the area that no alternative land would be allotted to those who refused sterilisation. By the afternoon a crowd had gathered and the fighting lasted well into the night. At the end of it, several policemen had been stabbed. It is rumoured that about 60 people were shot dead by the police. An official press release, issued through *Samachar* four days later, reported that only five people had died as a result of the shooting. The entire area was placed under a 72 hour curfew and kept under constant police watch for weeks.

Since this incident, the central government has expressed its reservations about the drive to legally enforce sterilisation. They have tried to impress these reservations upon state governments who still insist that forcible sterilisation is not only necessary, but possible.

The step between voluntary and compulsory sterilisation is not, as some would have it, an administrative leap towards more efficiency. It is the sort of step that separated the methods of the Weimar Republic from those of Nazi Germany.

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"... We have to take note of the quality of our population and see what percentage of our population is unwanted. In this country, owing to the influence of certain beliefs, a sizeable section are not producers while they have to consume to exist. . . If we want to develop into a full-scale welfare state, which is our aim, we should see that these classes of people are not allowed to contribute to the increase of our population and it is very necessary that these classes of non-producers are slowly eliminated. . ."

*Professor C.D. Rajeswaran.*

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"The very increase in population makes economic development slow and more difficult to achieve. The time factor is so pressing and the population growth so formidable, that we have to get out of the vicious circle through a direct assault upon this problem as a national commitment. . ."

*Karan Singh, Health Minister.*





On Sunday July 13th, four editors of black community publications were invited to discuss, on the Editors programme — BBC television, the role of the British press in shaping the present climate in which Asians have been racially assaulted.

BBC man George Scott, discussed with Darcus Howe, editor of the monthly journal, *Race Today*. Tarsem Purewal, editor of the weekly paper, *Desh Pardesh*. Asaf Jilani, Pakistani editor of the *Daily Jang*. Yudhvir, editor of the *Daily Milap*.

**George Scott:** *The murder of an 18-year-old Asian youth, Gurdip Singh Chaggar, in Southall, has sharpened racial tension in Britain. What I want to do to begin with is to ask you what you think was the significance of the events at Southall, and of the demonstrations which followed.*

**Asaf Jilani:** I think it signifies two things. First of all, I would say it's a watershed — it marks the emergence of the younger generation, and of the militancy of the younger generation. Secondly, it is the culmination of a long, concerted campaign against the Asian immigrants. The basic question is immigration policy.

**Darcus Howe:** I see it in this way. I believe that there are two forces that have been unleashed within the Asian community itself. The one that is concerned with demonstrating racial harmony, whatever that is; and the other tendency — which I belong to — which is concerned with the organisation and mobilisation of the black community, to show that we are here to stay, and that we are a formidable power in British society. It reproduces, in my view, precisely what happened in the West Indian community, when we underwent that experience. There

were some people who were running all over the place, demonstrating that we are nice people and you people mustn't attack us; and there were others who were saying: 'Under no circumstances are we going to tolerate that.'

**Tarsem Purewal:** Well, the significance of this murder, in my mind, is that the insults we faced during the last 15 years will not be faced by this younger generation.

*Asaf Jilani, you talked of a long, concerted campaign. In most of our minds, I would have thought that, until recent weeks, there was — it may have been a total illusion — but an illusion, at any rate, that things were going pretty well. Then in the last five or six weeks, suddenly there has been an explosion. Now, do you see it as going over a much longer period than that?*

**Jilani:** Yes, I would say a much longer period.

**Howe:** I have been in this country for 15 years, and there is not a single moment that I have spent here in which I am not aware, as all black people are, that the thing is beneath the surface. It is not as though it fell from the sky, it is not as though it's a sudden apparition — only the news media make it out to be



that. It's been there, it haunts us every day, and the tendencies to respond to it have been there as well. On the one hand, those who want to say: 'Please, Mr White Man, I'm here and I'm doing so much good, please help me.' And then there are others who say: 'I'm here, I don't care whether I do good or bad, because I'm not different from anybody else, but, if you want to attack me on the question of race, I am prepared to stand.'

**Yudhvir:** The campaign against the immigrants over here started from the BBC *Open Door* programme.

*But that programme was in the 'Access' series.*

**Yudhvir:** It may be in any series, but it has proved very injurious to the cause.

*I will have to say, and quite properly say, that the 'Open Door' series is put on by the BBC to allow other people to say what they want.*

**Yudhvir:** Whoever is responsible, that has created hatred, that was the beginning of the new wave.

*The programme we're talking about was made by people called the 'Campaign against Immigration'. They said certain things you didn't like, understandably. But Lord Pitt, eight weeks later, did have a chance to refute some of their arguments. Now, do you think that was not a good way of putting it right?*

**Yudhvir:** I don't think first abusing people, and then asking him to give his opinion, is a good thing. First to play the hatred, and then heal the wound, is not a good thing.

*Will you tell me whether you think we are now in a completely new set of circumstances?*

**Yudhvir:** Certainly, that hatred is there now. There was a time when only a certain section of people were against immigrants, but now I feel, even those who were never against immigrants, who had no part to play in politics, have come against immigrants.

*Gentlemen, you're all editors. You all have different responsibilities, different kinds of readership. In these circumstances, what do you see your role as being?*

**Jilani:** Basically, as I see it, our role is a dual one. One, to keep our readers informed about the developments here and in South East Asia, and the South Asian region. Secondly, to educate them and give them a lead.

*What sort of lead do you mean?*

**Jilani:** Jang, for instance, tried to bring Pakistanis and other Asian leaders out from their shell, tried to bring them into the political mainstream of this country. But now I see the way this racial violence has developed, it would be very difficult for me to tell Pakistanis and other Asian leaders to really participate in this society in a constructive manner, you know. All the time we have taken the view — particularly keeping in view the traditions, the values of Asians — that confrontation, coming out in the street, will not solve their problem.

*Mr Jilani, that's what you've been saying in the past, I understand you. Are you now saying it is no longer possible to give that advice?*

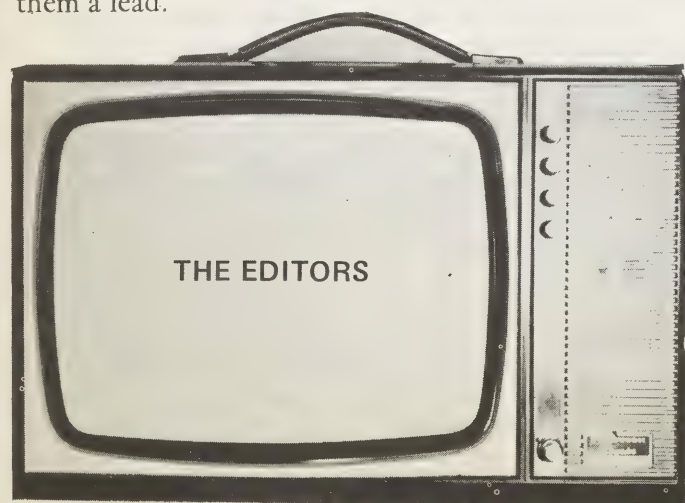
**Jilani:** No, of course, we will be giving this advice, and we have been telling our readers that they should be restrained in their emotions. But I would say that it would be rather difficult to emphasise that they should take part in the political mainstream of this country.

**Purewal:** I tell my readers that we should not take the law into our own hands. Because if they took knives into Southall, what will happen? Many people who are living in scattered areas will not be safe.

**Yudhvir:** We are trying to cool them, but if that type of propaganda goes on, the hatred goes on, it will become out of our control. None of us will be able to control them. For it is the primary duty of the British media to stop that hatred first.

**Jilani:** There are basic things, you know. One is the question of law and order, so far as racial violence is concerned. The other thing — and that is a basic thing, too, really — is that this is the time when Britain should really make clear the immigration policy. The basic thing is the fear among those communities — the host community and the Asian community. This is the time when we should, I think, think about setting up a Royal Commission to go into the various aspects of immigration.

**Howe:** Now there is a new set of circumstances, and the key to it all is the fact that this Asian community, that has always been presented as unified and of one mind, does not exist. Now, as editor of *Race Today*, and as part of the collective that brings it out, we deal with two things in this new set of circumstances. One, we have to combat the press: the *Daily Mirror*, the *Sun*, the *Telegraph*, and so on. A lot of filth and smears that they have been bringing out — we have to combat that to give ammunition to our white readership to carry on the fight. Secondly, we have to combat this leadership among Asians who propose to deal with the thing in a very defensive and reactionary way. By that I mean, that the leadership is about to say to everybody that we are not a nuisance, and that we must apologise for our presence by the fact that we work hard and all that kind of thing. We in *Race Today* say: 'Absolutely not.' We say, you know, if you are attacked, you have a right to mobilise to defend yourselves. You have a right to use this situation to show the kind of force we are, not only a force for defence against recent attacks, but a force for some kind of serious change





in the British community. Then, probably, later in the programme, we will try to show how, in bringing out *Race Today*, we pose it as an alternative to the way the *Sun* is brought out and the *Daily Telegraph*.

*Yudhvir, let me quote from your issue of 1st June. The lead story has the headline:*

*'Ban National Front to Save Britain From Violence'. And the first paragraph reads like this: 'The British media these days appears to be engaged in a funny sort of struggle. It seems a new journalistic award, details of which are yet to be disclosed, has been instituted and the correspondents have even lost their sleep to qualify for the same. Every British newspaper is vying with each other to carry a scoop about immigrants. There is a beeline of correspondents to areas predominantly populated by immigrants, and, almost every day, you will find them roaming about in Southall, Bradford, Birmingham, and other places in search of any material which can be used to create hatred and malice against the Asian immigrants'. Isn't that putting it a bit steep?*

**Yudhvir:** It's quite accepted they are doing it. Every day they are doing it.

*Actually going out to create hatred and malice?*

**Yudhvir:** My reading is that certain correspondents are deliberately doing these things.

**Howe:** It is an instinct to keep Britain white. It's an instinct to protect the Britain that the professionals, who are reporters, come from. And in protecting the Britain that they are part of, and to keep Britain white, they have to attack something else.

*Do you distinguish between the papers, or broad-*

*casting organisations?*

**Howe:** Oh, yes, you have to distinguish between the papers, because the papers distinguish among themselves. You have the *Sun*, the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Mail* — scandal, sex and sport. When it is not immigrants, they treat women in a particular kind of way. They treat sportsmen as commodities. They treat people in a particular kind of way. So I am not surprised when they treat us in that way. Then you have the very hypocritical *Guardian* and the *Times*.

*Why hypocritical?*

**Howe:** Hypocritical because they wouldn't say head on what the consequences are of what the other people do. So you have that hypocrisy, and you have a gutter press that deals with all sections of the population in that kind of way. There is not a single correspondent in this country who does not know that there is a reservoir of racist feeling in the British population. In the *Sun*'s postbag there is a letter, from a widowed pensioner, that says: 'The next time I go to the Social Security I am going to wear a sari.' And I am quite sure that the person who wrote the lead news story was aware that he would provoke such an opinion. Rather than attack it, reason with it, he sought to bring it out in some kind of excuse of vulgar populism — letting people say what they want.

*Well, I'm bound to say to each of you that I cannot share, and you don't expect me to, your almost comprehensively low opinion of my fellow journalists. I don't believe that as many are motivated in the way you feel they are. But the very fact that you feel this about them is itself an alarming and important fact.*

## REPLYING TO US

An editor of a national newspaper demanded that the BBC give him and some of his colleagues a right of reply to the views advanced by the black editors. On the following Sunday, leading British journalists got that right on the weekly Editors programme. George Scott discussed with David English, editor of the *Daily Mail*. Harold Evans, editor of the *Sunday Times*. And Ian Trethowan, managing director of BBC Television.

**Scott:** *Last week we heard a powerful attack on the way the press in Britain reports racial issues. The attack was made in this studio last week by editors of immigrant newspapers who are obviously distressed by the behaviour of British newspapers and television.*

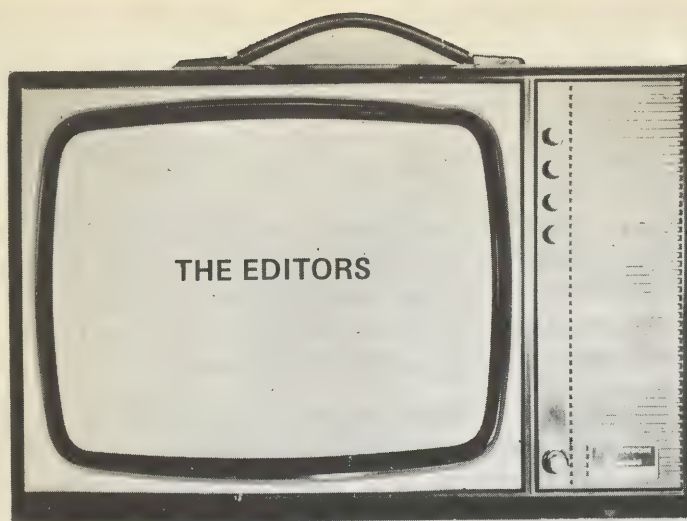
*Tonight we put the crucial issues to three men who have high influence in the business of information. David English, editor of the Daily Mail, Harold Evans, editor of the Sunday Times, and Ian Trethowan, managing director of BBC Television. David English, you saw last week's programme. How did you react to it?*

**English:** Well I was very depressed by the programme. It showed me how great the gulf is between the two communities and the media that expresses the views of the two communities. And it gave me a great deal of cause for thought. In fact I spent a lot of last week talking about it with other reporters and executives on my staff. And we are certainly looking at the way we cover race relations in Britain. But also, I

think the immigrant media has a very wrong picture. Maybe they should be looking at better ways to understand us, because I felt seeing that programme, there was a strong sense of paranoia running through it, the sense of conspiracy by the British press, this sense of reporters whipping up hatred against the immigrant community. Now as far as I know, there is really very little truth in that. Most of the reporters on the national press may not fully understand the problem, but I wouldn't see any racism in their work.

**Evans:** Well I go most of the way with David English. I'm very torn about it [last week's programme]. I've some sympathy with some of the things that were said, but no sympathy at all with two things: one, extreme statements made about everybody, 'no single newspaper', 'Every correspondent'. And I think that is wrong, just as it's wrong in the press when it says, 'all Asians are', or 'every West Indian is'. Those statements are stupid extremisms, and they're





stupid extremisms, whether they're made by a white man, me, or made by a black man or a brown man, and it's no defence of anybody's liberalism to try and pretend otherwise. And secondly, I was worried, as David English was, about the elements of paranoia, 'there's a conspiracy'. I think in fact there are much simpler explanations for things that are undeniably wrong and worrying about the treatment of race in the British press. And the most important source of anxiety is that we always put immigrants or tend to put them in a problem or conflict context. And that's because of the nature of news, and I think we have to worry about it and talk about it on this programme.

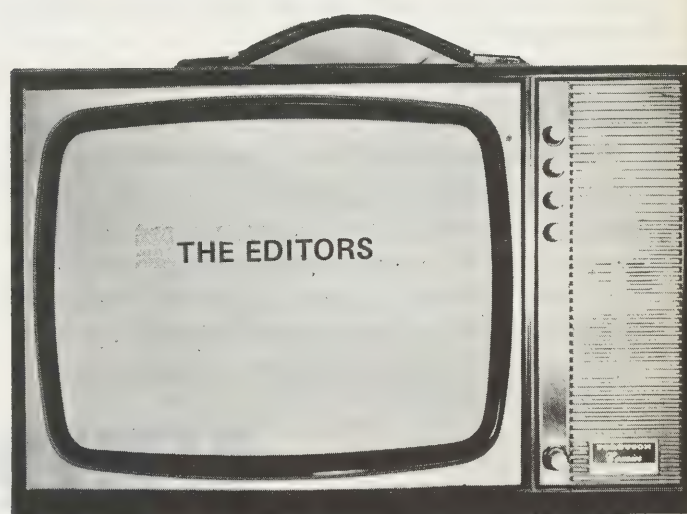
**Trethowan:** Yes, I agree. I found it a disturbing programme. Indeed the events of the last few weeks have obviously been disturbing in a number of ways. Surely, what it brings out is the dilemma that we all face, that all the media must continue to report what is happening in the society. If we don't, then we open the door to rumour, which can be immensely damaging. On the other hand, I think this is particularly a problem for broadcasting. One has to bear in mind that the act of reporting can affect the event that you're reporting. And this is particularly a problem for broadcasting because of the impact of sound and above all the visual impact, television. Take broadcasting, that there are editors of news programmes, editors of current affairs programmes, who each day are having to make judgements on specific stories, specific bits of films, specific bits of tape, bearing in mind this dilemma between telling the truth and telling the facts, but at the same time trying not to exacerbate situations — immensely difficult.

*Do you see a causal link between the reporting of racial issues, perhaps in an emotive way, and the violence which occurs afterwards?*

**Evans:** I'm sure there's a link between the way we report the event and the stereotype which is gradually built up. Some elements of truth are in a stereotype. David English mentions muggings in Brixton. I think this is worth a little bit of care. We were the first newspaper, with great reluctance, to mention this fact. But I've grave reservations about whether it's wise, sensible or honest, and in fact I think it's the contrary of all those, to identify minority groups in crime cases where their race is irrele-

vant. And it worries me if the idea gets around that mugging is something that West Indians do but not something that Irish or English or Welsh or Scots do. And one of the worst faults of the provincial press in this country, and there was a very interesting study done by Christopher Bagley, which identifies those papers — and he names them here — is to follow the practice of putting an ethnic tag where it's completely irrelevant.

*Are you satisfied now that you have not behaved in a way which did in fact inflame anti-immigrant feeling? We've already seen this headline: 'We want more money, say the £600-a-week Asians.' 'Four Star Provocation' was the headline on one of your leading articles. 'When the conning has to stop': and this takes up the story of the Hawley Report about what was happening in Bangla Desh and other places out there. There you say the conning has to stop, 'Emotive words are not needed to convey the strain on the British people's forbearance and the damage to race relations.' Another cutting: 'Asians jump the housing queue'. I could go on. I'm doing this for one reason only, to suggest that the impression left*



*in your paper in recent weeks is of the Asians being people on the make, on the scrounge and in turn therefore giving the feeling that they are citizens we don't want to see very much of over here.*

**English:** Well I think you're being very subjective because you've picked a certain number of articles, and I could produce an equal number giving the opposite point of view. For example, I investigated what happened to the vast bulk of Ugandan Asians that came to this country after Amin threw them out, some 18 months later, and did a whole two-page spread on the fact that virtually 99 per cent of them had settled down in this country, got jobs, were not living on Social Security, and were in fact a positive asset to the country. So there are two sides to reporting this whole area. Now then, the leaders that you quoted the headlines from were in fact not an attack on the Malawi Asians but on the insensitive, stupid, thoughtless local authority that put them in that hotel; that was the act that inflamed the National Front, for whom we have no time and we constantly attack, and that made people angry. And indeed Roy Jenkins himself has said it was a very stupid thing. And I think you have to report facts like that.



'We want more money' was probably a provocative headline and as an afterthought of last week's programme, yes, I think I would have changed that. Nothing else.

*Harold Evans, were you happy with the reporting of that incident?*

**Evans:** I go a little way with David but not all the way. I think the Gatwick incident was absurdly exaggerated. Of course the fault lay with the local authority; it was a very stupid decision, it was a very wet liberal decision to put them in ridiculously expensive accommodation, and I think it would have been monstrous to suppress that information, because that's the kind of thing that feeds the rumour that Ian Trethowan mentioned. Having said that, I am very critical of most of the papers which didn't put that story in the context of an isolated exception due to bungling by a silly local authority. To give the impression, as some of the reporting did, that it was widespread, was wrong. So I think that there are errors like that, but these errors are, as I said at the beginning, part of the fact that I'm afraid that we have a tendency to see news in race because we presume there's conflict. And going back to Brixton and to the anger you say that the immigrant communities feel, they are being conned in a way like everybody else — like the white community is. The anger and frustration felt in particular by some of the West Indians, but less so by the Asians who have a higher rate of employment, is the anger, bitterness at not getting jobs and this kind of thing; the blacks and the coloureds are very often the scapegoat for social ills like bad housing and unemployment. And I think that's the real danger, the identification in the press of these social failures with colour.

*Ian Trethowan, television of course followed up this Malawi Asian story at Gatwick. Are you happy that they did it in a responsible way or do you feel that they too are subject to the charge that they in some way inflamed the prejudice against Asians?*

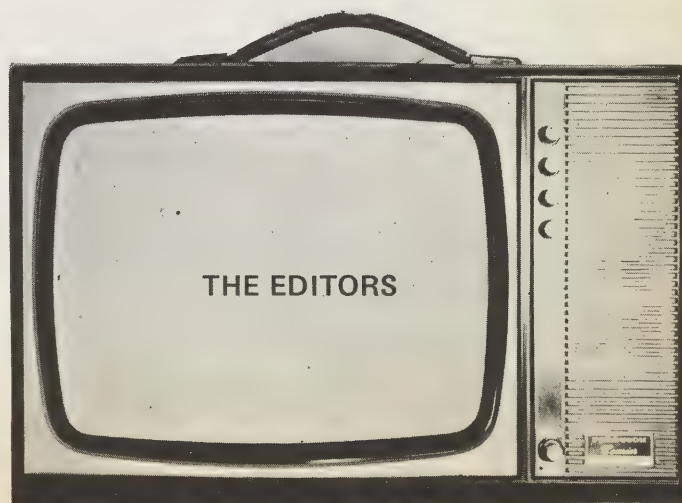
**Trethowan:** I have no doubt that it should have been followed up, for precisely the reasons that Harold Evans has given, that it's precisely the sort of story that if you don't bring it into the open will become exaggerated out of all knowledge. I think it was therefore quite right to follow it up. Whether it was followed up correctly or whether it was followed up in an exaggerated way, it's always arguable.

*You see, one reason for pursuing this particular story and indeed reading some of the other headlines is to refer back to what Darcus Howe, the West Indian editor, was saying last week. He was talking about this reservoir of racist feeling, this reservoir of prejudice which is always to be found in the British people, and that by stories like that we are feeding that reservoir. David English, do you think there's any truth in that? Do you think that you're guilty of feeding that reservoir?*

**English:** Certainly I think there is obviously a certain amount of racial prejudice in some people in this country as there is in every country, and I

should think the prejudice is in both communities. But I think we have to examine why that prejudice is there, and our part in it. Now it seems to me — before I came on this programme I spent the afternoon going through a whole pile of clippings from all the newspapers, and most of the articles and most of the leaders it seemed to me reflected a responsible attitude, the attitude that the Race Relations Board would like us to project, calling for understanding and so on and so forth. There were a number of news stories, but I couldn't find any leaders in support of Enoch Powell, none in support of the National Front. Now it seems to me that this then leaves a whole area of people who live in or near these immigrant communities who don't understand what's going on, and *they* see a conspiracy. I'm talking about the host population, the white Britons. They see a conspiracy by the press the other way. I am inundated by letters from people saying that we are too prejudiced on the side of the immigrant community. And I'm sure this goes for practically every editor in the country. I see Harry's nodding. I'm sure this is so. Now because *they* feel this conspiracy, because we lean over I think the other way, we may well be pushing them towards these fringe groups, like the National Front, who are the only people who are prepared to give the opposite point of view. And they give an extreme point of view, and I think we have to examine whether we're responsible for pushing people in that direction.

**Evans:** I think the worst attitude I could adopt tonight would be to pretend that everything's fine in the British press or even in the *Sunday Times*. But today for instance we carried a long report on Rotherham and how the atmosphere had been changed there by the National Front and the intimidation that has gone on. And we had a long discussion in my office with the executive and reporters on Tuesday to decide what is our attitude to the National Front. If a man, as *The Observer* said last week, says in reference to Southall, 'one down, two million to go,' an inflammatory, obnoxious, appalling statement, do you report it? Do you observe Section Six of the Race Relations Act? Section Six of the Race Relations Act ought to be repealed.





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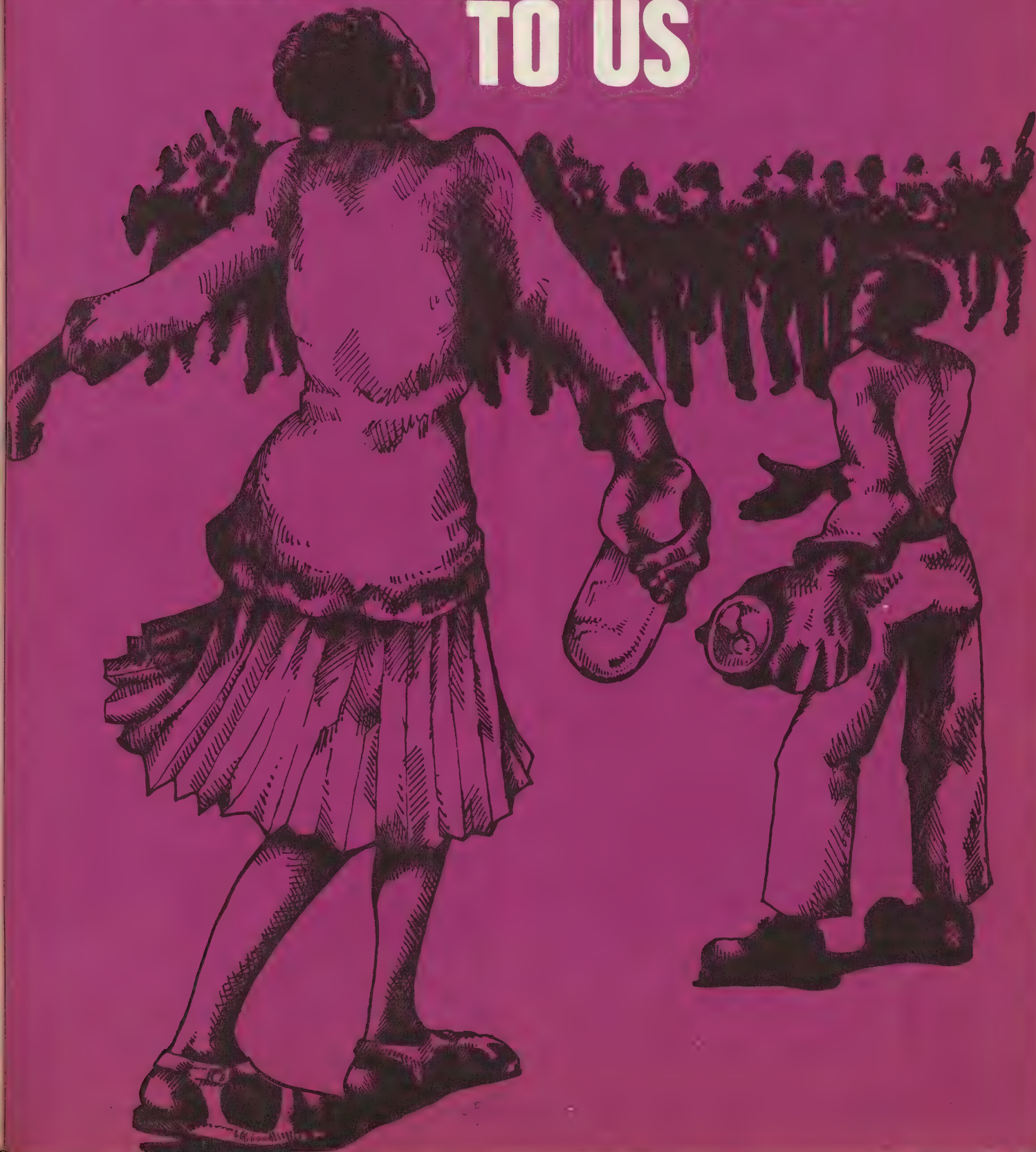
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# Race Today

VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN SEPTEMBER 1976 25p

## CARNIVAL BELONGS TO US





# LETTERS

## RACE AND THE LOCAL PRESS

Dear Race Today,

I was interested to read the hypocritical comments of "leading British journalists" in the article "Replying to us" in last month's *Race Today*, because the following day (19.8.76) the *West Lancashire Evening Gazette*, the only widely-read evening paper in this region, published the following letter: Betrayed

*Once again, the Reds crawl out from under their beds to attack the National Front. If they stop out long enough, we might find out what their true aims are for Britain.*

*The present and past governments have managed to betray the British people to such an extent that those who are not unemployed are nearly bankrupt. You cannot blame the National Front for this.*

*As for being a racist, I can see no wrong in wishing to retain one's ethnic identity. I have yet to hear of a foreigner being called a racist; it appears you can only be a racist if you are white, proved of being British or anti-communist. (Sic)*

*Constantly, we are told of the escalation of murder and crime figures. The Government's attitude is to show sympathy for the poor mis-guided offender not the victim. The National Front will restore corporal and capital punishment, so making our streets safer to walk in.*

ALAN G. MACHIN

(Press officer, Blackpool and Fylde National Front).  
Bethesda-road, Blackpool.

If this is not a clear example of providing a public platform for the purpose of incitement to race hatred, then I'd like to know what is.

This is a far from isolated occurrence (just read this which appeared on the same page):

### Socialists

*The political historian from Mereside, Coun Lewis, (Sic) says that the National Front was born out of the British Union of Fascists, tracing back their allegiance to the Nazi regime of the 1930's. The true fact is that Hitler and every member of the Nazi Party was an adherent of Socialism and was elected to the Reichstag as a Socialist.*

*The last two byelections proved that the National Front was supported by ex-Labour voters.*

These are examples of a clearly sustained campaign by this newspaper against immigrants, the labour movement and the left in general on behalf of reactionary forces and the National Front in particular.

Keith Hodges,  
Blackpool, Lancs.

## POLICE COMPLAINT

Dear Race Today,

On Saturday, 21 August 1976, my husband and I held a party at home to mark the 14th birthday of our son David, whose birthday falls on 22 August. Accordingly, a number of guests were invited to the birthday party. At approximately 4.30 am a number of both plain clothes and uniformed police officers, walked into my home which is situated on the fourth floor of a block of flats. The officers, informed my husband and I that they were raiding the party because the illegal sale of alcoholic drinks was taking place. I informed the officers that my party was a private affair with specially invited guests and that no drinks were being sold to anyone. Previous to the allegation by the police officers, one plain clothes man attempted to purchase two cans of beer from my husband Roy Collins, who informed him that the party was private and nothing was on sale.

The police officers continued with their intrusion of my home without a search warrant and began removing a quantity of beer and spirits from the premises. Some of the said goods were in my refrigerator. Again, I protested against the liberties being taken, but instead I was slapped across my face by one of the plain clothes men while in my own kitchen at home.

My brother, Allan Walker, who also protested about the officers behaviour was arrested. He too, was the victim of a vicious assault by the arresting officers at Moss Side police station. My husband was arrested but he was released without a charge being made against him.

Lydia Collins,  
Moss Side, Manchester.

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# EDITORIAL

## CARNIVAL BELONGS TO US

Two weeks before Carnival, we in *Race Today* gave an interview to the BBC about the forthcoming event. We said then, that we saw the staging of Carnival on the streets of Notting Hill as a political victory. This is true in two senses. Firstly, because we, as a community that have built Carnival in this land, had forced the police, some councillors and some free-wheeling racists in Notting Hill to retreat one step. (The story of that retreat, essential to our claim that Carnival is politics, is told on page 171.) Secondly, because Carnival brings various sections of the West Indian community together for an event on the streets of the capital with a particular sense of its identity and its strength.

Subsequent events have proved that this instinctive, even symbolic, unity came alive in action on Bank Holiday weekend. The police drew the battle lines and black youth moved to the forefront in the confrontation. There would have been no crushing defeat of a well-deployed police army without an event to which young British West Indians flocked in their thousands, some to follow pan, some to follow dub, some for the theft and pick-pocketing to which their wagelessness directly leads. All to offer battle when the time came.

It was this section of the West Indian population, this youthful majority, that saved the community from total humiliation that weekend. They may have come for distinct and different purposes, but they were willing to make common purpose and offer common resistance. Their togetherness arises from their common experience of what can or can't be done through schooling; of life within, or the battle to stay out of, other detentive places; of the realities of being offered, and refusing, the shitwork of the society.

Even the most antagonistic commentators didn't dare to say that it was the pick-pockets who put 325 police into hospital. The *Financial Times* commented: *"Those who steal or assault must be classed as criminals. But those who crowd round to prevent the police from arresting them, must surely be seen as expressing a kind of social or political anger, however inarticulate."*

In the same vein, and with the same knitted brow, the *Sunday Telegraph* moaned that the police could not operate without the consent of the community and that West Indians had clearly withdrawn such consent. The truth is that no-one at Carnival saw Patterson and his baton boys as people who'd come to win consent for anything. The West Indian community saw a force, and saw the possibility of instantaneously generating a superior one.

The post-mortem on the event, by no means over (David Ennals at the Home Office says nobody

should make any hasty judgements), has been carried out using the discredited anatomy charts that the press and politicians pull out with each expanding act of black rebellion. The hard liners call for a ban on Carnival. Writing in *The Times*, Inspector Wilkinson of Notting Hill, one of the chief culprits says: *"The Carnival used to be an occasion of innocent entertainment. If it goes on next year, it will be an occasion of hate and violence."* The more cautious, including William Whitelaw, call for an enquiry. We say no. No enquiry can tamper with the support that Carnival has from a quarter of a million blacks who were there, and millions who were not, whether they be in Britain or in the Caribbean. We move on to Carnival '77, and we say (in our open letter on page 178) what must be done in order to establish its organisation through the democratic forum of those with an interest in it. That means, by and large, the whole West Indian community, and some besides.

This battle for Carnival is no different from the battle that awaits the community over the trials of the 60 defendants or defenders of Notting Hill. After Peckham fair '72, Brockwell Park '74, The Crickewood Club '74, Leeds Bonfire '75, Notting Hill '76, the state is conscious that an energy which makes spontaneous battles and turns them into politically supported defences in court, is capable of generating fierce organisation in class combat. How the new Home Minister, veteran of Ireland, will counter, is not yet clear. Liberal journalists and frightened politicians have come up with the old formula: blacks are feeling their deprivation; feed them anaesthetic funds. They have even suggested a Ministry for the Inner Cities to be concerned, in the main, with blacks.

In spite of the welfare spending drought, the threat of civil disorder that the West Indian community has posed, will bring in its wake a catch of state funding, whether a new Ministry holds them in its gift or not.

The funds will flow for more hostels for the black urban homeless, for the drive to recruit more blacks to the police force; to fatten the rising black class that each year renews its promise, as yet unfulfilled to find gimmicks to induce young blacks to accept training and humble employment. The solution has not worked in the past and will not work in the future. A bed in a hostel, a blue uniform, projects which subtly try to do what schooling has failed to do, are not what the youth want. It is not for these needs that they manifest rebellion.

Until and unless British society ensures that this growing section of the population gets what it needs and demands on its own terms, it will have no option but to turn up, looking for the main chance at public gatherings. Especially those gatherings which they feel are demonstrations of their community's social power.

Race Today Collective Association September 1976



# CARNIVAL BELONGS TO US

By 1975, Carnival in Notting Hill had been established as a major social occasion in the lives of Londoners. An attendance of 200,000 people, overwhelmingly black, is proof positive of this fact.

The festival is not and has never been organised by a group of professional impresarios. Neither has the government or any other official body any say in its organisation and preparation.

From a small makeshift steelband and 500 revellers in the year 1965, Notting Hill's black community threw up organisers, who built up a festival of national and international status.

On Sunday and Monday, 29 and 30 August

1976, and for months before, the Metropolitan Police made attempts to undermine our carnival. They were repaid in kind. Several hundred young blacks inflicted a military defeat on a military organisation. The police came prepared for a confrontation and got it. When the history of the black community is documented, the skilful resistance, which young blacks displayed on Monday, 30 August, must be registered as a turning point in our struggles for those rights which constantly appear to elude us.

Race Today Collective Association

## BUILD UP TO CARNIVAL

### September 1975:

A handful of white residents in North Kensington launched a campaign calling for the removal of Carnival from the streets of Notting Hill. They were protesting the noise levels and the use of their front gardens as toilets. The campaign received the backing of a local rag, *The Golborne*.

### January 1976:

Local councillors, representing the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and Metropolitan Police officers met with Carnival organisers at the Town Hall. Councillors and police informed the organisers that they supported the white residents' campaign and suggested that Carnival be removed from the streets and transferred to an enclosed area — White City Stadium.

The organisers resisted the suggestion and Chief Supt. Ron Patterson responded with threats. He warned that should the organisers insist on a street festival, he [Patterson] would refuse permission for stall holders to set up stalls on the roadside. He further threatened that the parade, unlike previous years, would be flanked by rows of policemen, and the streets heavily policed. A bewildered Committee asked for time to consider the points raised. A further meeting was scheduled for the 13 April 1976.

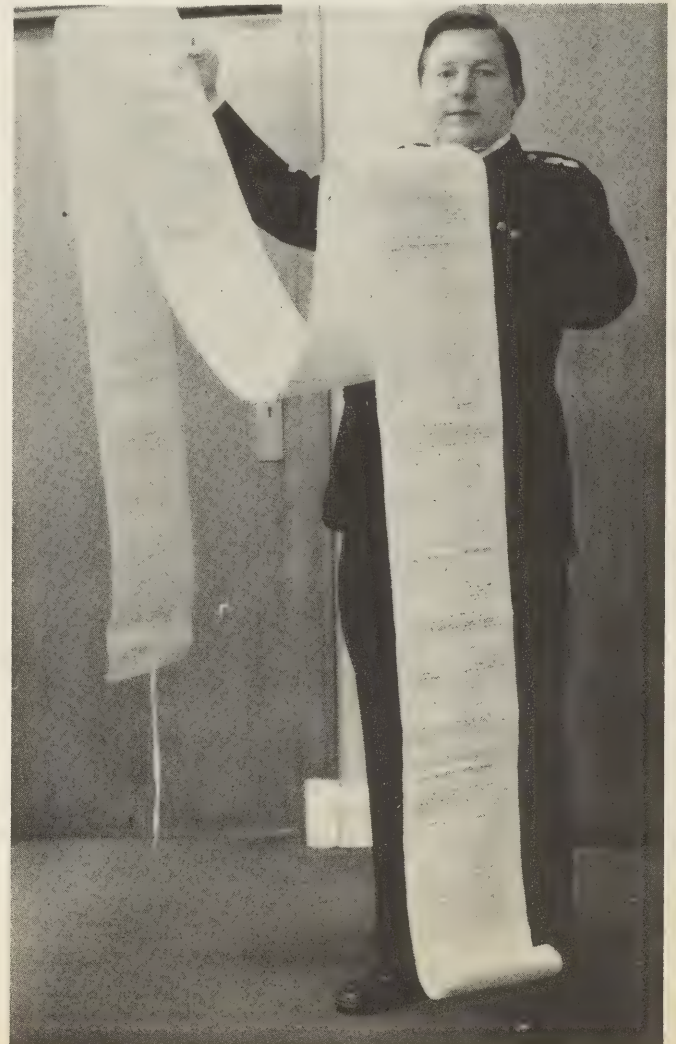
### February 1976:

*The Golborne* resumed the campaign against the Carnival being held in Notting Hill. "A 72 hour razz-ma-tazz with canned music blaring through the night is clearly a real nuisance."

### March 1976:

The white residents' campaign is taken one step further. A petition bearing 500 signatures is handed to Chief Supt. Patterson. The signatories demand that Carnival be removed from the streets and threaten a High Court injunction should the festival be allowed to continue as in previous years.

Even though negotiations were in progress, between councillors, the police and the Carnival organisers, Chief Superintendent Patterson stepped outside the discipline of these negotiations and approached the press. He appeared in the *Kensington Post*, the local newspaper. He was photographed holding up the white people's petition and was quoted at length in



Chief Supt. Patterson



the article that followed:

*"If the carnival were held in the streets this year, we would have to think in terms of not hundreds of police but thousands. Police leave might have to be cancelled not just here but throughout the Metropolis."*

*"I am 100 per cent convinced that the carnival has outgrown itself and is no longer suitable for the streets of Notting Hill or any other London streets in its present form. It disrupts the everyday life of those people who don't wish to be subjected to the noise. I genuinely hope a carnival will take place this year — but away from the crowded streets."*

About the white people's petition: *"It was handed to me by a North Kensington housewife. She said it was a token of support for the police by the ordinary people of North Kensington."*

A senior police officer from the Notting Hill area contacted a member of the Carnival Committee. He voiced his disquiet at the heavy-handedness of Chief Superintendent Patterson. He intimated that there was a feeling among his men that Patterson was a menace, and he informed the Committee member that should Patterson raise the question of pickpockets, the reply ought to be that more packets are picked around the West End on a normal shopping weekend than at the Carnival festival.

Notting Hill Social Council, a non-statutory organisation, called a meeting to test public opinion on the Carnival issue. The meeting passed a resolution supporting the campaign that Carnival be held on the streets of Notting Hill.

Chief Superintendent Patterson, the leading police negotiator, suggested that the Carnival be held in Battersea Park. He continued to act outside the discipline of official meetings. He stealthily took one member of the Carnival Committee off to Battersea Park, aiming to convince the member of the virtues of a Carnival procession in the park.

#### April 1976:

Carnival organisers informed councillors and police that they [the organisers] needed more time to consider proposals raised in the January meeting, and that the scheduled 13 April meeting be postponed.

Alderman Methuen, deputy leader of the Kensington and Chelsea Council, could hardly wait for the next scheduled date. He rushed into print with a memorandum to the Home Secretary. He was hedging his bets. He outlined to the Home Secretary the views of the whites, the police and, of course, the local council. There were strong reservations, he said, expressed by the police on grounds of law and order and by the Borough Council's health officers.

About the Carnival Committee, this is what he had to say: *"On the 9 April, the carnival committee contacted the council and asked for the meeting to be postponed on the grounds that they were as yet unable to offer any proposals in answer to the questions raised in the letter from the Deputy Leader of the Council. The council accepts that satisfactory answers would indeed be very hard for them to find."*

Further, Methuen wanted money for amenities from central government funds. He did not want to spend council funds.

The Carnival Development Committee wrote to Mrs Lennon, the leader of the protesting white residents, asking for a meeting to discuss the problems with a view to sorting out the difficulties. Mrs Lennon replied, asking the Committee to refrain from sending any further invitations to attend unofficial meetings. The Carnival Development Committee published its first and last public statement which stated the following:

*"First, the festival takes place, as it did in the past, for two days — Sunday and Monday — over the August bank holiday weekend on the streets of North Kensington.*

*Celebrations will terminate at 11 pm on each day.*

*The huge build-up of crowds on the Portobello Green would be discouraged and greater mobility for the crowds would be facilitated by an increase in traffic free areas.*

*Three hundred stewards, drawn from within the community, will take the responsibility for bringing order and organisation to the celebrations."*

#### April 31 1976:

Councillors, the police and the Carnival organisers met to discuss proposals raised in the CDC's document. At the end of the meeting it was agreed that Carnival would take place, as in the past, on the streets of Notting Hill. No details were given to clarify the process through which both councillors and police came to accept those proposals which were completely rejected only a few weeks before.

#### July 1976:

Carnival organisers applied for a liquor licence. They were faced with threats from Patterson that the police would carry out arrests on those who sold alcohol illegally. (In past years, the police turned a blind eye to the stall holders who sold alcohol.) Organisers thought, and reasonably so, that the way to avoid police/black confrontation on this issue, was to approach the courts for a liquor licence. Once that licence was granted, the organisers would give permission to particular stall holders to carry on the trade. Patterson opposed the application on two occasions, and the application was turned down. He appeared to want, almost to need, a confrontation.

#### August 1976:

Rumours abound in the Notting Hill area that the police would be out in force on both days. Enquiries at the CDC revealed no hard details. No one from the Committee could throw light on the outcome of several meetings between Committee members and the police on the question of policing. As tension mounted, the Black People's Information Centre wrote to the Commissioner of Police warning of an impending explosion should there be too many police officers on the streets.



# "...IS A POLICE CARNIVAL"

Darcus Howe, Editor of *Race Today*, has participated in Carnival since its inception. He has been active in the black community's struggles against the police in the Notting Hill area, and in 1971 he was a defendant in the Mangrove 9 trial which resulted from one such confrontation.

We asked him to write a personal diary of his experiences and observations at Carnival this year, and below, we publish his account.

This was my eleventh Carnival. I have, been participating in the festivity since its inception in 1965, sometimes as a reveller and at other times, at various levels in the organisation of the event.

Once it emerged in January 1976, that police, local councillors and a few white residents were determined to have the Carnival removed from the streets of Notting Hill, the *Race Today* Collective gave me the responsibility to carry out a campaign in the pages of our journal, aimed at winning the struggle to retain the festival on the streets.

In the February, April and May issues of *Race Today*, we sought to demolish the frivolous objections of the opposition and further we outlined what we felt to be the responsibility of the organisers of carnival. It was a free-for-all campaign—

no holds barred.

The opposition mobilised a petition and Chief Superintendent Patterson was on hand to receive it. He posed for photographs in the local press, holding the petition head-high. In his capacity as senior police officer responsible for the Notting Hill area, he exploited the local press to the full. When he was not doing that, he tried to split the organising committee, counselling this member now, and then taking another for a ride in his car and a chat. He threatened, cajoled and manoeuvred. Mrs Lennon, spokeswoman for the white residents, was undoubtedly in close contact with Patterson and local councillors. She threatened a High Court injunction if she did not have her way. Alderman Methuen, deputy leader of the local

council, issued his memorandum and sought the intervention of the Home Secretary.

Patterson, we are told, waved a copy of *Race Today* before the Carnival organisers protesting the contents. To all our accusations about his activities and manoeuvrings we received no reply. The same cannot be said for Methuen. He wrote to *Race Today* complaining about the tone of our article and our editorial policy. We published these.

The Chairman of the Carnival Committee visited our offices. We outlined our strategy and won his cooperation. It was a hard-fought campaign, and by 31 April, we were the victors. It was Carnival as usual. Or was it?

The mini cab turns into Pembridge Road. We are on our way to the Carnival. Along Pembridge Road, into Chepstow and left into Westbourne Park, there are policemen everywhere. On every corner there are at least two uniformed officers, sometimes three or four. This is Sunday. The mini cab stops at the corner of Great Western and Westbourne Park and I make my way along Westbourne Park. I am heading for the Mangrove Restaurant. The Mangrove is my permanent link with Notting Hill. The streets around link the terrain on which I received my first baptism in the realities of political life. Half-way along Westbourne Park I have already passed ten uniformed police officers. I lose the ease and freedom with which one approaches the Carnival festivities. I am on the alert. It is a discipline which most West Indians have learnt when in the presence of police officers.

Rhythm and steel penetrate the air, turn into Powis Terrace and it is the Ebony Steelband. They are jamming a Kitchener calypso. I meet Pepe, Joe and those brothers and sisters who, in the previous weeks, could talk about nothing else but costumes and sweet-pan. Someone passes me a bottle of Vodka and I oblige.

I cease counting at 20. They are all uniformed policemen. The jamming continues and then there is an interruption. It is sharp. "Move on! Move on!", snaps the senior police officer. "Get moving."

I cross Westbourne Park and into All Saints Road. I am greeted by the Mangrove crowd on the corner. "Oh God Darcus, is a police Carnival."

"Boy, it look like the police have dey own band."

"D, is police for days. Is dem Carnival?" The flippant comments betray a feeling of shock. A bottle of Bacardi is in circulation and after he braces himself with a huge drink, Terry confirms what we all know.

"It boun' to have trouble, they take too much rass clart liberty."

The comments are now flying thick and fast as we settle down in front of the Mangrove.

"Who it is negotiate wid the police?"

"Darcus, you ent know that the police was coming out in force?"

I confess ignorance.

"Why the Committee ent tell we?"

Basil is operating the sound system. He senses the mood and proceeds to sharpen the atmosphere with Sparrow's, *How yuh Jamming so!*

Someone shouts above the music, "Ah feel strong and ah feel bad."

I leave with a companion and head for 'under de bridge'. It is the other focal point of the Carnival festival. I arrive to witness the first confrontation. A group of blacks surround two police officers.

"Whey yuh take him for?"

"Wha wrong wid selling drink. Yuh ever hear 'bout a Carnival without drink?"

"All yuh dread. Ah know whey all yuh want, you know. Ah know whey all yuh looking for. Yuh go get it."

I inquire and am told that Chief Superintendent Patterson's Pale Ale Brigade is in action. They locate a vendor who is selling Pale Ale, an English beer. They stalk their prey and then pounce.

The Pale Ale Brigade registers its first success in the military encounter. I have an image of General Patton, no Superintendent Patterson, receiving on the radio the first report of success in his Pale Ale Campaign.

Within minutes the Brigade has whisked off a second victim. In frustration someone protests that black people are fuckries for allowing the police to get away with it.

I disagree but hold my peace. The confrontation will come but it's early days yet.

Walking around, and searching out, the police operation begins to take shape. There are two central points. One of them on Acklam Road, opposite the teenage disco, the other is situated around the corner from the Mangrove. At these points forces of policemen are concentrated. They sit idly in coaches, reading paperbacks, playing cards or simply chatting to each other. If they are on hand to search for pick-pockets, then Robert Mark has to explain how a police officer does that sitting all day in a bus. No. It is a reserve force ready for the confrontation that Scotland Yard has predicted.

I make my way back to the Mangrove. Ebony is turning into Lancaster Road, still chaperoned by 40-odd uniformed policemen. They are certainly not looking for pick-pockets. If they were, then I propose to give up journalism and take up picking pockets. Remember the statistics. 40 policemen make one cordon.

A strategy begins to emerge. The police have come expecting a confrontation. The bands are chaperoned along a





defined route, 40 policemen to a band. Along that route, bus and van loads of policemen are strategically placed. At the first sign of trouble, the 40 officers form a cordon, a long line across the street. At the other end reinforcements are called in and the crowd is sandwiched between two lines of police officers.

The increased numbers of policemen have little or nothing to do with pick-poc-

kets. They form part of a military strategy to defeat a hostile rebellion, which senior officers know to be on the order of the day.

I return to the Mangrove and as the hours pass by the tension mounts. Bay 57, one of the steelbands, is standing in front of the Mangrove entertaining the Mangrove crowd. Further along the road there is a scuffle. The police are involved.

About 70 police officers are disgorged from the green coaches parked around the corner. They stampede their way in the direction of the scuffles. I distinctly hear a police officer say to another beside him, "This is where it starts."

He has obviously been briefed, prepared and drilled for the 'It' — the confrontation. Within seconds they form a cordon across All Saints Road at the Lancaster





Road end. At the Westbourne Park end buses are parked face to tail across the road and both pavements. Both mews which run off All Saints Road are blocked off with military precision. We are hemmed in on all sides. The Inspector knows my face. His smile is the smile of the victor. A solitary bottle crashes on the coach. They have won this round.

We pass the rest of the day outside of the Mangrove. The hilarity which accompanied past festivals is not there. Time and again someone tries to recapture it with a prance and a dance. We acknowledge the attempt and nod our approval, but we tacitly agree that the spirit cannot be recaptured. Too much police. The challenge has been laid. What shall the response be? What will the second round bring?

By 10 pm we all leave and head for the Sparrow show at the Olympia. Not even the calypso king of the world could revive the spirit. We treat him with a courtesy that is forced. Sheer politeness. The discussion continues. The tales of the day are recounted. Sparrow or no Sparrow, something's got to give. We make our way to Hammersmith Palais. It is the Carnival Sunday night dance. Perhaps a miracle will happen. The Gods may smile and the spirit of Carnival return. Tough luck. Not even West Indians could evoke the spirit of Bacchus under spiritual siege.

I make my way home. I ponder on Patterson. He is smiling as he did after his success in leading the invasion of Anguilla. He has had a good day. Maybe promotion, but certainly the respect of his superiors for conquering the black front.

I toss and turn all night, persecuted by our collective humiliation. I am up and out by 11 am. I get to the Mangrove at midday or thereabouts. The first sight confirms that there is no reprieve. I am in time to see Frank, our Frank Critchlow, owner of the Mangrove,

hustled into a police vehicle. Two coach loads of police officers are parked in front of the restaurant. Inspector Wilkinson, smooth and suave, is in control of this version of the Pale Ale Brigade. They seize the time. It is early and the crowds have not yet gathered. Again scores of officers alight from one of the coaches. They seize a refrigerator stacked with Pale Ale. They take Otto Manning too. Otto, my childhood hero, frontline diego in the Casablanca gang from East Dry River, Port of Spain, scourge of the Invaders gang whose territory is further west. I see Otto once a year, at Carnival. We share memories of our own history with Boots Davidson and Lennard. No more. There are only a few of us in this town. I bite my lips till they bleed. I summon some order within my soul and ask the Inspector, in British style:

"Have you got a warrant?"

"Yes", comes the reply, "you can come to the station and see it."

"Is there bail on the warrant?" I rejoin.

"Yes, he will be out in a few hours", says Wilkinson. I arrange for some folks to visit the station. Meanwhile, the Pale Ale Brigade is taking away cartons of beer. One of our small imps is railing up. He wants the confrontation here and now. He is oblivious of numbers — of logistics. I counsel patience and get a positive response.

Within 15 minutes I leave to join the Sukuya Steelband. I need composure. I calculate that two perhaps three hours knocking hell out of steel — we call it the iron — would restore the balance. Everyone now knows of the raid on the Mangrove. The news has spread like wild-fire. I answer several queries. I rave and wail and once I am convinced that coolness, hard-headedness has returned to my soul, I make my way back to the Mangrove.

My children await me. I exchange glances with my eldest daughter, Tamara.

She is ten. I try to reassure her in a glance that all is well. I know she does not believe me. I can't deceive her. I explain the tension, I outline the situation to her. "Do you understand?" I ask. "Yes daddy, I do."

I begin to prance, and dance about. For the first time in two days I feel the situation is in hand. John is here, Sarah, Jessica, Rahmat, Big Winston, Boots, Bigger, Chokee, Mandy. The *Race Today* crowd arrives — Leila, Pat, Burtie, Iris, Akua and Beese. I am safe I know it.

The news arrives. The confrontation has begun. The black youth have issued the counter challenge, 'under de bridge'. Bottle and stone and no place to shelter.

Within minutes the battle reaches All Saints Road, in front of the Mangrove. Scores of young blacks are on the move. Hit and run are their tactics. Mobility is the discipline of the urban guerilla. They stone the police, run away, regroup, stone again. I am told that a stand up fight is out. The youth have been using the entire area as their terrain. Hit, run. Hit, run. I witness scores of policemen on the run, pursued by young blacks. As the police are chased by one group, another group would break into shops and take that wealth which in peace time is not available.

I clear the street, All Saints Road, of women and children. The Mangrove is the house of refuge. No police protection for non-warriors. All press reports of policemen protecting life and property — sheer bilge. Those who are caught up in the confrontation outside of the Mangrove are protected by us. We provide space and comfort for the bewildered.

I over-hear a police officer returning from a battle charge.

"Why the fuck did they bring us here?" Not a single police officer in ear-shot disagrees with him.

Bewildered and frightened, the guts had left the boys in blue. Never in my 16 years in Britain have I seen police officers reluctant to exercise authority. Robert Mark has a silent rebellion on his hands.

The next morning through the media, I listened and read the Commissioner's boasts about no go areas. He was talking to his men, a tattered and a battered army. He was seeking to restore morale. How many hisses greeted his pontification in the police canteens?

Some blacks were arrested. A member of the *Race Today* Collective was. They were beaten and abused but the larger success gave them a spirit which London police cells has never seen before.

Pick-pockets? Mark, the Commissioner, propagandised that the police were out in force to protect the law-abiding blacks from 800 pick-pockets. He registered 16 arrests for theft over two days. That says it all.





# "LAST WEEK IT WAS SOWETO THIS WEEK IT'S NOTTING HILL"

Carnival '76, ended in a full scale battle on the streets of Notting Hill, waged for four solid hours by black youth against the police.

325 policemen were reported wounded and 60 people reported arrested and charged. Below, we publish a first hand account of one of the black youth arrested.



The detention room at Paddington police station is packed out. We are lounging everywhere, on the single plank bed, on the floor, leaning up against the walls and against the double-locked heavy door.

"Last week it was Soweto, this week it's Notting Hill", remarks X. He wears denims and his hair is nattily plaited.

We've been in the cell over two hours. Cigarettes are passed around. Everybody talks to everybody, riding on the spirit of jubilation on all the faces, in all our gestures.

"We shouldn't have run back every time the police charged."

"If we had gathered our strength we coulda beat them."

"Yes, we lick dem good boy They did take a heavy licking."

"Boy?? What??" — the accents mingle — Jamaican, Barbadian and plain Islington. Cell-mates for a couple of hours, the first batch of prisoners rounded up in the police-black battle of Notting Hill Carnival '76, we exchange essential histories: where we were born, which towns we came from, our experience with the police in Brixton, the Grove, Harlesden, Birmingham, Leicester. . . .

"The police come there to war", one of the brothers said. He was clutching his

head, rubbing it, smiling thoughtfully.

"Yeah, they catch a licking in Leeds, Stockwell, Cricklewood. We deal them some heavy blows in the past few months, in the street, in the courts and all."

"Yeah, sight" — everyone in the cell is familiar with the incidents we are referring to — "and they get a good warring too."

Every now and again the door opens and a couple of coppers escort the latest arrivals into our cell.

"You catch licks?" is invariably the first question.

We have all been through the rigmarole



of moving from one bench to the next, one room to the other in the station, being interrogated, photographed, finger-printed, abused, pushed, kicked, even warned menacingly about 'next time', by the generally bewildered police officers of Paddington Green.

Like the rest of the brothers in my cell, I was picked up by the police in Ladbroke Grove. I was arrested at about a quarter to seven, an hour and a quarter after the battle started. From mid-morning the crowds had been flocking into the Notting Hill area. Towards the end of the afternoon, having jumped up behind the steel bands, checked all the scenes and having drifted away from my friends, I found myself at the corner of Acklam Road and Portobello Road, one of the thumping hearts of the revels. Across the 'bello' flies a highway, and under the fly-over the heavy dub groups were staging their section of the carnival, belting out the sounds of bass guitars. Around them were about a thousand young people, enthusiasts of the sound systems we follow, such as Prince Melody.

The next thing I clearly recall is the unforgettable sight of 30 policemen, legging it in full retreat down Bevington Road pursued by hurled bottles, cans and stones. All around me people are picking up the objects closest to hand and throwing them at the policemen who now seem to be everywhere.

"Man this is getting fucking heavy, I'm getting out of here", says the vendor on the stall selling revolutionary literature. The loudspeakers are still alive with *"Chase Them Crazy Baldheads Out of Town"*. Some young black women are now on the platforms holding the speakers. "Yeah, lick them", they are shouting into the crowd. For a good ten minutes the crowd holds the cross of Acklam and Portobello. Then it begins to thin itself out in all directions. As the crowd moves, the battle moves with them, up the 'bello' down the 'bello' and into Ladbroke Grove, with groups of police chasing youth and drawing a barrage of spontaneous fire from others who re-group when they outnumber the police.

By the time I get myself to the corner of Oxford Gardens and Ladbroke Grove, scattering with the crowd and pausing for breath with strangers who are suddenly comrades, there are sounds of police sirens, running feet and shouting people above the backdrop of the distant steel drums. Near Cambridge Gardens, about 30 yards away from where 300 police are forming up behind dustbin lids, a rastaman is haranguing the crowd. He stands in front of about 500 youths and he waves his red, green and gold stick at the police lines. "Burn the wicked", he shouts and the crowd watches, fascinated.

"I walk through fire", he screams and begins walking towards the police ranks, waving his stick. The crowd behind him, more cautious than this valiant, are hurling bottles and cans at the police ranks from the safety of distance. "Get them", is the cry from the police ranks as hundreds of mahogany sticks are raised in the air and a stampede of blue moves towards the crowd. The dustbin lids push towards us and the batons come down with skull-cracking determination. The rastaman is overrun by what seems like a hundred policemen who seem to be making straight for his solitary figure.

As I turn with the crowd I stumble and fall. Other policemen emerge from the side streets as we make our hasty way up the Grove. I am grabbed from the back as I run, and a baton, or a 1000 batons batter my skull, and regulation boots land random kicks as I fall to the ground. I am dragged to the police van and thrown into it. In the van there are four others. The windows are covered with police coats. We are grabbed by the coppers inside who look threatened and frightened. "Take down the coats", says the Inspector, "they mightn't stone us if they see niggers inside."

At the station another prisoner tells us that the wounded black youth, who thought they were being taken to hospital in ambulances, were carried to police stations, arrested and charged.





# AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CARNIVAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



Julian Stapleton



Julian Stapleton

*Dear Gentlemen,*

In January of this year the Carnival faced an overwhelming challenge to its continued existence in the form that has been painstakingly built up over the past ten years.

As you well know, this challenge came from a handful of white residents, a section of local councillors and the Metropolitan Police. They wanted the Carnival removed from the streets of Notting Hill and imprisoned in the White City Stadium.

In these circumstances, you, the members of the Committee, bore a greater responsibility than any of your predecessors. The white residents, local councillors and the Metropolitan Police represented the power of the British state. You, on the other hand, had recourse to the power represented by the quarter of a million people who attended the 1975 festival.

Moreover, an organisation was at hand, an organisation which you the organisers had the responsibility to weld together and develop into a weapon, sharpened to fight the opposition. Here, we refer to

the disciplined organisation that shapes a mas band, a steelband, the preparations of stall holders, the local West Indian businessmen and those individuals, all of whom have a direct and immediate interest in the festival. We have described your base without which you can be nothing but a group of brief-case toting impressarios.

We in the *Race Today* Collective advised in the pages of our journal, as early as April 1976, that you call a general meeting of the embryo organisation described above. We further outlined that, to this general meeting, you would report the state of play in your negotiations with official bodies and evolve a programme and policy to deal with the organisation of the event, and implicitly, the opposition to it.

It was, in our view, the only basis on which you could wage a principled struggle against those who sought to destroy the carnival. All else is manoeuvre, "close vibes" and "beautiful meetings", which some of your members have been mouthing. You could perhaps organise a children's tea party with a loose





organisation clothed in hippy jargon; you cannot fight the state successfully that way.

You sat on your laurels once the police and the councillors backed down on 31 April and conceded to carnival being held on the streets. For you that was the end; for the police it was only the beginning. Once you took the responsibility for organising Carnival, you ought to have known that the police would concede at this point and try to recoup at another. They never give up. One quarter of a million black people on the streets of Britain in 1976 is a political event. That is how the state sees it. It is not simply an artistic festival of fun-loving West Indians.

It is now the case that our enemies would use the clashes between blacks and the police on Monday, 30 August, to argue for a ban on Carnival celebrations on the streets of Notting Hill or any street for that matter.

The process through which we wage the struggle for a police-free Carnival in 1977 must begin with you. We understand that you are calling on the Home Secretary to institute an inquiry into the events of Sunday and Monday. To what end, we ask? Who will inquire?

You ignored our suggestions and went your own way. As a result, you were out-witted and out-manoeuvred at every turn by the Metropolitan Police.

Unlike previous years, when the police maintained a low profile, many of us were faced with more than a thousand policemen on the streets who did their best to police the Carnival out of existence. Even so, no one, bar no one, expected so many police officers until the week before the Carnival. You must have known, you ought to have known what the plans of the police were. After all, you were in negotiation with them for eight months. It was left to the Black People's Information Centre to protest the increase in policemen to Robert Mark, Commissioner of Police. You remained silent. We suspect that you were too paralysed to act because you refused to build the organisational vehicle to do so.

As a result, it was each to his own on the streets

of Notting Hill on Sunday 29 and Monday, 30 of August. Young blacks took up the gauntlet as a consequence of your ineptitude, and rescued our community from what would otherwise have been a complete humiliation.

Do you really believe that an inquiry, headed by a judge, who went to Eton, or perhaps Winchester, and then on to Oxford or Cambridge, will give us what we want? Ask those youths who come before them daily? We want a Carnival on the streets of Notting Hill in 1977 and an inquiry is hardly the terrain on which to fight for it.

As an alternative we propose the following. It is your responsibility to present to us, your public, a full report on the history of negotiations you entered into, from January 1976 to date; whom you met, when you met them and what was discussed. You have also to tell us the details of your organisation over the two days. A financial statement must accompany such a report. You will present this report to a general meeting of those with a direct interest in the carnival — mas men and women, steelbands men and women, stall holders, local businessmen and women, sounds men and women and interested individuals. The general meeting will consider your report and elect a committee which will be responsible for organising next year's Carnival. We emphasise elect, because the leadership of Carnival is not a monarchy which is passed on from one elite to the next.

That general meeting and the leadership to emerge from it will form the basis for the fight for Carnival on the streets of Notting Hill in 1977. Nothing else will do. We in the *Race Today* Collective will monitor the developments closely. You either move forward or move on over for others to take your place, others who are prepared to take on the task in hand.

Yours in struggle,

**Darcus Howe,**  
for the *Race Today* Collective Association.





# "REMEMBER, REMEMBER, THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER" THE BONFIRE NIGHT CASE

The black community in Chapeltown, Leeds, has fought and won its first major case against the Leeds Police Force. Of the 24 charges relating to Bonfire Night there were 21 acquittals.

In the following interviews, two defendants and a parent of one defendant, outline the experiences of this particular trial and describe an existence which has always to take into account the presence of the police as a constant factor in their lives.



Danny Cohen and Glenville Sheriffe outside Leeds Crown Court on 11 July where they had just been acquitted of all charges against them:

The events of Bonfire Night, 5 November 1975, in Chapeltown, Leeds, will live long in the memory of the black community. On that night, black youth of all ages gathered, as they usually do, to celebrate the occasion. Trouble was expected. Bonfire Nights of the preceding years had been occasions which the Leeds Police Force had used to force a confrontation with the youth, resenting the fact that on these occasions their control of the streets is challenged.

5 November 1975, was no different. The police were well-prepared. Even though they had agreed with social and community relations workers to keep a low profile, they sealed off the area. When an un-marked CID scout car entered into the territory where the celebrations were in full swing, the youth were not fooled and the intrusion was met with a barrage of bricks.

In response the police sent a convoy of vehicles, led by a personnel carrier which included dog patrols. The battle began in full earnest. Sections of the youth organised to take care that civilian cars would not be attacked and these were directed away from the battleground. For one and a half hours, these youth and school-children, employed and unemployed, were in complete control of the streets and had the police force on the run.

Not one youth was arrested during this incident. Three arrests came later that night and the rest in the following days. The police subjected the community to terror and harassment as they rifled the black community for 'suspects'. Homes were raided, parents intimidated and youth dragged from their beds and beaten into making statements in which they admitted all charges.

Schools were visited by the police

and the help of teachers was enlisted in the hunt. At one school, children were asked to write compositions on the Bonfire Night events which were then handed straight over to the police.

Nine more people were charged as a result of this sweep. All 12 were charged at first with relatively minor charges of assault, possession of offensive weapons and criminal damage. Later, nine had the charge of Affray added.

A defence Committee was formed to mobilise the black community and to work out a strategy for the case. They had public meetings, organised pickets outside the court, produced leaflets and news sheets on the case. With the assistance of other young people in the area they also raised funds by having netball and basketball matches, a karate display and a cultural evening.



*You both grew up in Leeds. Can you give some details about your background, your family, the schools you went to and what you are both doing at the present time?*

**DC:** I am 21. I came here 13 years ago. There are three of us in our family, me and two sisters. I went to Cowper Street School and then Primrose Hill School.

After I left school the first job I had was with a tyre firm as a tyre fitter which didn't last long. I've done other jobs but I've not had a really steady job for the last year and a half. To get a decent job in this town is hard. From the time you go down to the dole office they say, well, we have an interview here, go and check it out, and it's normally as a labourer or something. The jobs they offer I don't want them, they are indecent. I used to work as a labourer on a building site and it was hard. I had to lift wood and other heavy things, in the cold as well. I went to one job and the guy in charge said I have to be 21. I said, "I am 21." He said, "Well, we're full up." That's the next thing they say.

**Shaft:** I am 19 years old. I came to this country 15 years ago when I was four. My dad is from Nevis and my mum is from St. Kitts. My dad has gone back to St. Kitts and my mum works part-time, cleaning in a hospital from 4.30 pm to 8 pm.

I went to Cowper Street School, then to Harehills County Primary and then Primrose Hill School. About 75% of us were West Indian at school.

I'm an apprentice precision engineer. I work from 7.30 am to 5.30 pm. Out of 300 workers I am the only black one there. I think all white men are two-faced and you never know what they are thinking. But at work they've shown me the nice side. I think the manager probably told them not to say anything about the case and only sometimes they would say something. Like the other day, there was a fire and they said, "Shaft better keep away because he might think it's Bonfire Night".

Most of the guys I move with are not working. Some of them have tried to get jobs but once they see they're coloured, they don't get them. Others got fed up with looking for jobs.

*How do you spend the time you have to yourselves, and how does the constant police presence intrude in this area of your life?*

**Shaft:** Well, after work I go home, clean up and then ride on up to my friend's house. Five of us meet regularly. We've been running together for sometime now. Three are not working including DC. We help each other, like if any of them need money and I've got it, I'll give them.

We have a sound system called Screaming Target. The first sound we had was stolen and this one has cost us £300 so far to build up. We get hired out to

play at parties and weddings and sometimes down at the Community Centre. Most of the youth who follow the sound are from the age of 16 to 25. Some go to school, some work but the majority are non-workers.

I find the police are involved in a lot of my life. Put it this way, living in Leeds feels as if you're in jail. If you put one foot wrong, accidentally or whatever, it's like your sentence. You fear to do anything. You fear walking the streets alone because you can just be walking along and a policeman will come and start talking to you. He'll give you cheek and if you give it back you will probably be charged with assault. From when I finish work 'till the time I'm home at night, I'm on the look out. I try my best to keep out of sight of the police. If I see them coming one way I turn the other. I try to be like a ghost to them. Everytime we play the sound I expect them to be there.

**DC:** If I go to Blues at the weekend, I get up about six in the evening. During the week I don't go anywhere. I get up about ten in the morning and I play me tune. There isn't much to do really. The main thing I have is the sound.

About five of us meet up in the afternoon depending on what we're doing. Say, if I want to go to the record shop the others will come. If it's a nice day, we'll go over the park. During the day the park is full with mostly boys. I don't know any girl that's not working. After the school holidays a whole heap of youth leave from Primrose Hill School and they can't get no work. There is not much place for them to go, just the Community Centre or otherwise Blues.

Almost everybody I know has been in trouble with the police. The police are always about, it's a natural thing now in Chapeltown. Everywhere you go you see them and you get used to them being around. You live your life accordingly. Everything you do, everywhere you go, they are there. If you are in the park sitting down quietly, they will drive through three or four times and look 'pon we. So the Babylon is.

*Last year Bonfire Night was a major confrontation between black youth and the police. Can you give some background to this and the circumstances in which you both came to be arrested?*

**Shaft:** Well, the conflict with the police has been going on for about three years now. It gradually built up.

The first year, the first real violence was when someone threw a banger by a policeman. One of the youth saw it and went to pick it up and as he did, it exploded in his hand. The policeman turned round and grabbed him, and said he was trying to light up his trousers, or something. When they tried to put him in the car his brothers dived in and tried to help

him get away and everyone just joined in. The following year, an officer just sort of passed — he didn't say anything. About ten minutes later another officer went past. Then after that two CID cars came by Rossington Grove. Just after that, I heard a fire engine coming up, it started to out the fire. The crowd started to boo, and the firemen turned their hoses on them.

Last year, I went to the bonfire, not really expecting trouble because I thought the police would show more sense. I saw the beginning of the trouble and decided I would split, but I did not go home. I went to my friend's house. Later, when I reached home, as I was turning into my gate a car slowly drew up, it was the police. They asked if I was Kevin Sheriffe, (that's my younger brother. He has been involved with the police before). I told them I wasn't Kevin Sheriffe, I was Glenville Sheriffe. One of the coppers said, "you'll do". They took me to Chapeltown police station.

In the police station I told them exactly what happened but they were not satisfied. They said they had three witnesses who said they had seen me throwing a stone. I said, they must have mis-identified me because I wasn't around there at the time. They asked me if I wanted to make a statement. I told them yes, and I wrote down what I had told them before. I was taken to a cell and after a while brought back up. Then they started all over again, only this time, they were saying, "you went down there deliberately to cause trouble, didn't you?" I said, "No." Then they would say something like, "you threw the stone through the car window, didn't you?"

"Which window did you hit?"

I told them I didn't hit any.

He would say, "I thought you said you hit the side one".

That is how they made the statement up. I was charged with Criminal Damage and Intent to Cause Grievous Bodily Harm. I was not allowed bail.

When I was in custody people were telling me how frightened they were because the police were just going around picking up anybody. I heard that DC had been picked up and I thought that was ridiculous because I knew he wasn't there. I heard also how the police went into the schools and how the teachers made the children write essays on what they did on Bonfire Night and according to what was in the essays they were picked up.

**DC:** Because this town is so small, everybody knows Shaft and me. We were the oldest out of the ones arrested. Most of the youngsters they picked up were about 15, 16 and 17 and they can't take that kind of police pressure. I feel that they picked up the young ones, threatened them and ask them for names. They get a list of names from them. We heard about this list. They check the names on it properly,



see DC on it and find out that I have a record and follow it up from there.

I knew the police would come for me. I got arrested a week after Bonfire Night. They came to my home for me. One of the guys went upstairs to open the door. The next thing I knew, some Babylon come and one get me, put my hands up behind my back, took me upstairs, give me a couple of licks and threw me in a car. One asked if I live on my own. I said, "yes". He said, "well, no one is going to miss you then".

They took me to the station and tell me that they have reason to believe that I was involved in the Bonfire Night business. I told them I don't know nothing about it. They hit me over the head and tell me that Shaft say this and Shaft say that. A whole heap of blows go on up there. There were about seven Babylon in

there. They beat me and fractured my cheekbone. The swelling was there right up until the case. I get blows for just about everybody on Bonfire Night. Eventually, I decided to cooperate with them and make a statement and that is how I made my statement. I said all that they wanted me to say, which was, I was at the bonfire at such and such a time, that I was involved in smashing up a white Viva and turning over a red Viva with Shaft and Henry [Grey]. I signed it.

*The trial has recently finished and you were both acquitted. Is there any aspect of the trial that has particularly impressed itself upon you?*

**Shaft:** What I was charged with was changed. I was charged with Criminal Damage, which was throwing a stone at the police car door and carrying an Offensive Weapon. Then later, of course,

Affray.

The way the police presented their case is unbelievable. They presented it as if it was true and I knew it wasn't true and I wouldn't blame anybody who believed them. The lies they told and the things they put down that I was supposed to have said. You might as well say they can just pick you up and present anything in front of a court. That's what makes me sort of fear.

When I went in the witness box I felt I had to defend myself and tell what really happened as best I could. They were saying that I was responsible for the car that crashed into the tree. I was saying I was around the area but I wasn't down there at the time. That was my main defence. The prosecutor always tried to twist me up and said why would the police say I didn't make a statement if I say I did make one?

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### A PARENT SPEAKS

I came in from work that evening. One of my daughters was here and we had our tea. I planned for us to go out that evening. We finished tea and the 'phone rang, it was Mrs Paul. She told me that they had my son at the police station. I got panicky. What was the first thing to be done. He had got into trouble before and I was worried they would bash him. He had come home the week before and said he was worried they might pick him up. I lost my nerve. I could not concentrate. I had to ring a couple of solicitors before I got one.

At the station I asked who was in charge. They said I had to wait and that the solicitor was with him. I didn't know the solicitor or what he looked like. When I was allowed to see him, I saw his face was swollen.

In the witness box at the trial they tried to say his face was not swollen. They asked me if I knew my son's face — if I ever looked at it closely. I said, "but he's my son". They tried to say swollen eyes run in the family and I told them to look at his face, only one side is swollen and each side of mine is alike.

Even if a child is bad he is still your child and you have to show some concern. I was worried because he was the oldest of the defendants and he had been in trouble before which made me think he would not get off. Sometimes he does not come round to see me and it annoys me and I say I am not going to court but I always do. This time I felt that he had not done anything. That he was not there on Bonfire Night.

It took a lot out of me those few weeks, I could not sleep especially that last week. We did not eat properly. Sometimes at work I felt that I should tell someone but I felt that I could not trust anybody. I have only told those people close to me, those that I find genuine. I haven't got many friends really and I don't have the time to go around to people's houses. I have my full-time job and my full-time work here in the home.

I don't mind getting together with anybody I'll do whatever little bit I can, because I have children. I have never been in trouble but I never can tell. The way the police are carrying on, if they can't catch my son, they will get another black. I would like to join a black parents organisation, but when black people start having anything it never seems to get off the ground, so when people start telling me about things, I never take notice. They expect to see success overnight. We don't unite properly. I'm not against joining anything like that if you see it's going somewhere. When I was at court I felt it was about time people started to get together. The support they gave was very good. Even if my son had got sent down it made me feel that someone cared.

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I tell him, the policeman is in uniform and have the power to say anything and they stick up for each other.

I feel that the jury let me off because they believed that the police were lying. Up 'till now I still can't believe that I got off. I had started to make plans for when I come out in two years time. It's a miracle that we got off.

**DC:** Up to now I can't believe that they let me off. The police said they couldn't

remember anything, that was the benefit of the defence. All they can remember is what is in their notebook. When PC Salisbury was asked what he was doing for the two hours he was with Henry [Grey], he couldn't remember. He could not remember if he was with his partner or anything.

The prosecutor asked me why I didn't tell my mum I was beaten up. I said that, I didn't tell her because I feel that they

would beat her up too. If they beat me then they can beat my mum. He also tried to say that I made the statement voluntarily. He tried to say that all the other times I was charged, I owned up to the charges. So, this time why did I own up to it first and then deny it? I tell him that from the time I was under licks, I tell them anything. Anything they want to hear. It was seven of them. I tell him, well, if he was black, and get in trouble he would



see how he is treated.

*This is the first time the black community in Leeds has fought a case of this kind. What effect has it had and how do you see the future?*

**DC:** From the time I was arrested the whole town knew what was going on and there were people helping to see that we got off. So this case was different completely. There seemed to be a lot of people behind me helping me, you know, whereas in the other cases it was different. It was just me alone and the police. They tell you to get a lawyer, and my mum gets one. But this time it was different. It was really nice.

**Shaft:** More and more people are not being fooled by the police. I don't know what they are trying to do arresting every-

body, trying to punish all they could punish. But they have done it for the best because the parents are beginning to understand what's happening and beginning to know what to do.

Before this case, my mum knew what the police were like. Everybody knows what the police are like, but she always thought of us and tried to keep us out of trouble. After the case she understand how black people are getting arrested and sent to prison for nothing at all. She understands the police lie, because she went up to the police station with my brother and they told her a lot of lies. They lied on what she is supposed to have said and what she didn't say. So she understands all what happens now.

But I feel, say in the future, it's going

to be worse trouble because the police are going to be looking for revenge. We've got our backs to the wall and we can't go back no further. There's only one way for us to go and that's forward. You have to get the strength to deal with everything from yourself. Like you get somebody that will sit back and will accept what the police are doing because they have no choice. But somebody like me now, I can't accept that sort of thing. I just can't accept it.

I don't know why there is not a strong organisation to deal with the police in Leeds. Me, Danny and friends, are looking for something like that to happen. We can't just push it ourselves. We have to have somebody with knowledge and know how. We know what to do but we haven't got the authority to do it.

## THE DEFENDANTS

**David O'Henry Cohen**

(21) Unemployed

5 November 1975

Affray

Criminal Damage on a West Yorks.

Metropolitan Police (WYMP) car

**Verdict: Acquitted of all charges**

**Derek Melrose Crossley**

(17) Welder

5 November 1975

Affray

Criminal Damage on WYMP car

Vauxhall OUB 468L

**Verdict: Acquitted of all charges**

**Eurie Stephenson Maurice**

(17) Apprentice Tailor

4 November 1975

Criminal Damage on Opel car

**Verdict: Acquitted of all charges**

**Glenville Ashley Sheriffe 'Shaft'**

(18) Apprentice Engineer

5 November 1975

Affray

Criminal Damage on WYMP car

TUG 468M

Possession of an Offensive Weapon  
(a stone)

**Verdict: Acquitted of all charges**

**Maxim Paul Beresford Farrar**

(26) Lecturer

5 November 1975

Affray

Threatening Words and Behaviour in

Spencer Place

Inciting to Obstruct a Constable in  
the Execution of his Duty

Assault on a Constable

**Verdict: Acquitted of all charges**

**Ernest Vernon Fleming**

(16) Schoolboy

4 November 1975

Criminal Damage on Opel car

Criminal Damage on Bedford van

Criminal Damage on Anglia

Threatening Behaviour in Hamilton  
Place

5 November 1975

Affray

**Verdict: Pleading guilty. Sentenced  
to six mths in a detention centre**

**Henry Ronald Grey**

(17) Welder

4 November 1975

Criminal Damage on Opel car

Criminal Damage on Bedford van

Criminal Damage on Scott Hall

Pub windows

Criminal Damage on Ford Anglia

Possession of a Firearm (air pistol)

with intent to commit an indictable

offence, namely assault causing

Actual Bodily Harm (ABH)

Common Assault on an Unknown

man in Sholebroke Mount

Threatening Behaviour in Harehills  
Avenue

5 November 1975

Affray

Criminal Damage on WYMP Vauxhall

OUB 468L

Criminal Damage on Vauxhall TUG

468M

Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) with

intent on PC A. C. Mann

GBH on Sgt. J. F. Carter

Possession of a Firearm at time of

committing an offence in the first

schedule of the Firearms Act

ABH on Inspector G.E. Jew

**Verdict: Pleading guilty to Criminal**

**Damage on Opel car and Criminal**

**Damage on Bedford van**

**Found guilty of Criminal Damage on**

**Scott Hall Pub windows**

**Given three months detention centre**

**Keith Ian Gumbs**

(16) Schoolboy

4 November 1975

Criminal Damage on Opel car

Criminal Damage on Bedford van

Criminal Damage on Scott Hall

Pub windows

Threatening Behaviour in Harehills

Avenue

**Verdict: Pleading guilty to Criminal**

**Damage on Opel car and Criminal**

**Damage on Bedford van**

**Found guilty of all other charges**

**Received a deferred sentence of six  
months**

**Claude Livingstone Hendrickson**

(15) Schoolboy

5 November 1975

Criminal Damage on WYMP car

Vauxhall OUB 468L

GBH with intent on Detective Sgt.

O'Boyle

Affray

**Verdict: Found guilty of Affray, Criminal**

**Damage on WYMP car and Common**

**Assault on O'Boyle**

**Sentenced to Borstal**

**Anthony Clancy Pyke**

(18) Unemployed

5 November 1975

Affray

Threatening and Abusive words and

Behaviour

**Verdict: Found guilty of Threatening**

**and Abusive words and Behaviour**

**Sentenced to Borstal**

**Clyde Sheriffe**

(16) Schoolboy

4 November

Criminal Damage on Opel car

Criminal Damage on Ford Anglia

FUB 702D

5 November 1975

Affray

**Verdict: Pleading guilty to all of 4 Nov-  
ember charges**

**Found guilty of Affray**

**Sentenced to Borstal**

**Michael Walters**

(14) Schoolboy

4 November 1975

Criminal Damage on Opel car

5 November

Criminal Damage on WYMP car

Vauxhall OUB 468L

**Verdict: Found not guilty on direction  
of the judge**



# NOTHING FOR ASIANS —

## COUNCIL REPLIES

On 2 August 1976, a delegation from the Bengali Housing Action Group discussed the housing of Asian families in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets with representatives and officials of the Borough Council. It was the first meeting between the representatives of the 35,000 Asians who live in Tower Hamlets and the local council. It was not a routine meeting. It took place only after a demonstration and lobby that BHAG staged outside the Town Hall on 30 June 1976.

The delegation, consisting of the secretary of BHAG, three executive members and an ordinary member, opened the meeting by telling Councillor Winterflood, Councillor Harvey and six officials of the council, that BHAG represented a large section of the community and electorate of Spitalfields. As such, we had not come to the council to beg favours or make allegations of discrimination in housing against Asians. We had come to ask what they were willing to do to alter council policy, to ensure the housing and rehousing of the Asian families, for whom they, as elected representatives, have a responsibility.

The council has now sent BHAG a memo of all the points that were raised at the meeting and their replies to them:

- a) The council says that they are "unaware of any racial policy concerning the allocation of dwellings in this borough. The only problem that exists in the rehousing of Asian families is that on the whole the families wish to live in the Spitalfields area and this is obviously not possible."

Nevertheless, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets has housed Asian families in the Spitalfields area.

Over the last two years, *Race Today* has made out a detailed case for housing Asian families together in an area in which the community has constructed for itself a certain amount of security from racist attacks. We believe that what the councillors write off as "obviously not possible" is the only possibility that the Asian population of the area is

willing to countenance. Elected councillors are not merely in charge of existing housing stock. They are also in charge of the money that comes in from rates and taxes and the plans for the building of new housing and for the renovating of old houses in the area.

- b) The delegation told the councillors that several of the member families of BHAG are at present living in pretty derelict housing belonging to the Greater London Council. In negotiations with the GLC, the Bengali Housing Action Group was told that the Borough Council would have to nominate the families they couldn't rehouse themselves, to the GLC list. The BHAG delegation put this to Councillor Winterflood, Chairman of Tower Hamlets Health and Housing Committee. The Tower Hamlets' reply to BHAG puts the ball back in the GLC's court. It now seems that the GLC, who asked us to approach Tower Hamlets, has to make a request to Tower Hamlets to nominate homeless Tower Hamlets families to the GLC list.

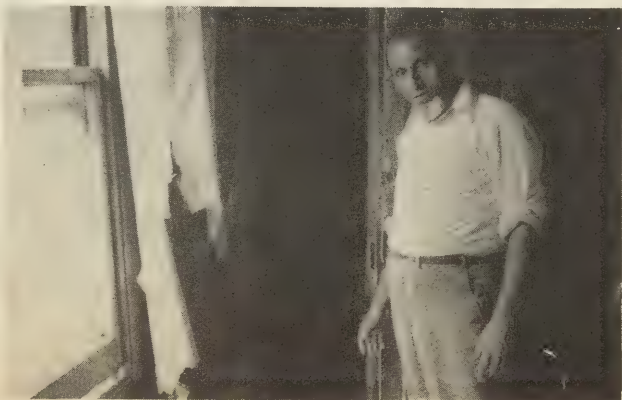
As far as the members of BHAG are concerned, this is just a game of bureaucratic ping-pong being played between the GLC and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. In the end, families who have been living in the area for several years in makeshift 'squatted' accommodation have to be rehoused by the borough in which they are living. Either Councillor Winterflood takes the responsibility for rehousing these families, or he nominates them to the GLC list and ensures that they are rehoused by this central authority. Asking BHAG to approach the GLC to request Tower Hamlets to nominate these families to the GLC list is a game that Asian families are refusing to play. We are families who want accommodation, not ping-pong balls on the table of British officialdom.

- c) The delegation approached the council to take serious steps to stamp out illegal practices such as 'squat selling'. To quote from the council's minutes of the meeting: "There has been nationwide publicity of corruption and malpractices such as the selling of council-owned 'squats' to Asian families. These allegations, made on TV and in the press, relate specifically to the Borough of Tower Hamlets—Your committee has taken no notice of or action on this matter."

The Council's reply:

"Legal action is taken to evict all squatters in council-owned property, regardless as to whether the illegal occupants have made a cash payment to the previous tenant or not."

That, of course, is missing the point, or evading it, Are the elected councillors saying that in the case of illegal squat selling or squat renting, their only concern is with the eviction of the occupants? Are they saying that it is not their business if an official of the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets (the local CRC) and others are discovered in this practice and are at present before the courts for such crimes?



Tabid Miah whose family are slum tenants of the Borough of Tower Hamlets.



## BLACKS IN THE POLICE FORCE?

In our January issue this year we published a letter from CLR James on blacks in the police force. James' letter and our considered decision to publish it, sparked a controversy in the columns of our paper and in the community. We gave publicity to both the proposition and the opposition, to those who countered James' view and to those who misunderstood it. Returning to the controversy, we publish below the joint views of five officers of the Community Relations Council. It is not our view, but we make no apology for publishing in our backlash columns what members of the community put down, sign and mail to us. Our responsibility extends only to opening the debate and printing the views on all sides of the question. As for our own view, we are confident that any reader of *Race Today* knows where we stand.

We have followed the debate for and against recruitment of black people (from within the black ethnic minorities) into the Metropolitan and Provincial Police Services. We now wish, in our private and personal capacity, to welcome the Metropolitan Police Service for undertaking the £25,000 advertising campaign to recruit black police officers. There are several reasons why this recruitment should now take place on the national basis.

Several years ago there was dissatisfaction within the black ethnic minority communities over the absence of police officers recruited from these minorities; as a matter of fact, in the late 60's the West Indian Standing Conference had strongly advocated such recruitment. To date the Standing Conference's stand has been joined by sections of the ethnic minority press and organisations.

At present it is reported that there are 43 such police officers, seven of whom are women, working in the Metropolitan Police Service. We believe the national figure is somewhere in the region of 180. So far, to our knowledge, there is not any record of discrimination suffered by any of these officers within or outside of the service. Neither, to our knowledge, is there any record of these officers showing partiality to members of the public based on ethnic origin.

In the debates which have taken place, certain fears and apprehensions have been mentioned, some of these seem to be aimed at dissuading black youths from choosing a career in the Police Service. Such dissuasion we disagree with. All members of the British citizenry must be permitted to embark on

careers of their own choice without fear of ostracism for doing so. Who aspire to be law makers (Councillors and MP's), must also aspire to be enforcers of the law, each one according to his own aspiration.

Those who aspire to be the one generally receive the support and encouragement of their folk; so those who aspire to be the other must receive the same support and encouragement.

In the legal profession there are a Judge, Prosecutors, Clerks of Court, and Justices who belong to black ethnic minority communities. They perform their duties properly, without hindrance or favour in doing so. Black police officers will simply be an extension or an increase in the numbers thus engaged in the legal process.

The fears which prompt certain circles in their effort to dissuade black recruits cannot be dismissed without some consideration. Nevertheless, the attitude and fear that black police officers will adopt the evil practices of those white policemen who have been accused of brutalising black people is negative and self-condemnatory.

Admittedly there are good and bad police officers. It is wrong, therefore, to believe or fear that black police officers would be influenced by, and adopt the practices of the evil police officers instead of being influenced by the good police officers. On the contrary it is our belief, whether minimal or not, that scores of black police officers employed in the Metropolitan and Provincial Police Service, would provide practical means to reduce the alleged excesses of the errant white police officers. Equally, the presence of black police officers scattered throughout the country would provide the Police Service with an opportunity of generally changing the "racist" image attributed to them. Indeed, we are sure that the opportunity offered to white police officers to work with black colleagues would give the white police officers practical experience of what black people are really like, instead of seeing them only as "arrested" or "suspected" persons.

Getting to meet and to work with people often leads to getting to know and understand them.

Black police officers *must* not be made to consider themselves as anything more than police officers. They must not be burdened with the responsibility of being considered either as representatives or guardians of their people. The only thing expected from them is that they become good police officers, not losing the confidence of either their own or the community at large. The only thing expected for them is that they receive equal treatment from recruitment, to training onto promotion, and that there will not be any limitation to their recruitment while the respective police services remain undermanned.

David Chakravarti,  
Principal CRO, Birmingham Community  
Relations Council.



Vernon Clements,  
Senior CRO, Coventry Council for Community  
Relations.

S.H. Zaidi,  
Senior CRO, Sandwell Community Relations  
Council.

E. Cris Le Maitre,  
Senior CRO, Wolverhampton Council for  
Community Relations.

Trevor Hall,  
CRO, Rugby Community Relations Council.

## WEST INDIAN CRICKET FANS

In response to your successful article on *The Stylistics of Millwall*, I would like to follow this up with an article on another aspect of the contribution to sport in this country by West Indians.

I am not considering our contribution as players, but as an audience. I feel that Caribbean cricket-lovers have contributed a new dimension to the world of sport, just as our players have in every field I shall talk about cricket:

The current series of test matches between England and West Indies has followed the same hectic pace as the Prudential World Cup series last year. For cricket fans generally the cricket over the past two years has been rich in entertainment value and for the West Indian fan in particular extremely successful. West Indies won the Prudential World Cup and the current test series but suffered at the hands of the Australians last year.

West Indian fans have often added to, or rather enriched the cricket circuit here in England with their lively repartee and sometimes controversial attitude to the game, but it was during the Prudential World Cup series last year that they added a new dimension to the terraces — the tin can rhythm section. The emergence of this annoyance has left a stupefying effect on the more tranquil English fan but has considerably enlivened the enthusiasm of the fan from the Caribbean.

To the English cricket fan brought up on a diet of highly restrained and ritualised cricket this is obviously outrageous. Restrained in the sense that only attacking shots were applauded briefly, probably followed by a polite and snobbish "well played old boy," and ritualised because most English cricket fans view test matches as an arena for displaying supposedly symbols of status. The privileged membership class, the ridiculous brigade in their MCC ties, Middlesex ties, Surrey ties, etc., all of which

entitles the owner to the freedom of the main pavilion and an opportunity to rub shoulders with the well known celebrities who frequent the cricket circuit.

This of course is far removed from the majority of fans from the Caribbean whose only aim is to enjoy the cricket. Generally we achieve our enjoyment not only in the razz-ma-tazz of can and drum beating whistle blowing and bell ringing but by making a sound assessment of every ball bowled, every stroke played, catches taken or dropped and balls gathered or misfielded, and we are unrestrained in our verbal contribution to what we assess. To be on the receiving end of verbal abuse of this shrewd enthusiast, be you compatriot or opposition, could be quite a humiliating experience.

It is rather interesting observing the West Indian fan during the course of any test match. For most of us it is a respite from work, a well earned vacation from being harassed and over-worked, and an opportunity to get away from the demanding responsibilities of family life. More important it gives us the opportunity to be with a large group, a group to which we belong and with which we can share all the least attractive features of chauvinistic man — the excessive drinking, the distasteful profanities and the crude sexist jokes. Very often the English players fall victim to our venomous abuses. Currently Tony Greig is our chief victim. He is referred to cynically as 'The African', 'The Afrikaan' and somewhat appropriately 'The Groveller'.

Inter-island rivalry, so much a feature of cricket politics in the West Indies is totally absent here. Every single West Indian fan supports the team rather than the individual although there are always petty disagreements as to whether Rowe is a better bat than Richards. Should Murray retain his place in preference to Findlay? Should Boyce be forgiven for his indecisions in Australia? All are agreed, however, that the Roberts/Holding combination is far superior to the Lille/Thompson partnership.

More important however, especially when the West Indies are on tour in England, cricket gives the West Indian a voice. It is the only sphere in England in which he is seen to be competing on equal terms with whites and most important of all it gives him his dignity back. The game, for him at any rate, takes on a racial dimension.

Taking all this into consideration one can easily understand the West Indian fan's total indifference to authority, his arrogance in the face of possible police arrest and his total disregard for normal conventional behaviour at test matches. Cricket offers him a theatre and he is obviously a star. At the end of the day he would stagger out of the Oval, walk up the road to Brixton or Harlesden, or the Grove, where with his friends he would carry out the post-mortem of the game over a few bottles of rum until the wee hours of the next day.

Denzil Winsborrow,  
Hatherley Road, Sidcup.



# A REVIEW OF WESTINDIAN WORLD

*Westindian World* first appeared in 1971 as a black popular weekly newspaper. Now, five years later it boasts a circulation of 10,000 to 20,000, and has established itself as the major black national weekly of Britain.

In a review of issues of *WIW* over the past three years, Barbara Beese and Leila Hassan, members of the *Race Today* Collective Association, assess the intervention *WIW* has made in the black community in Britain.

The mass immigration to Britain in the late 1950's of workers from the Caribbean territories, created a new addition to the indigenous work-force. It had needs and preoccupations of its own, which the British press — national, local, radical and conservative alike — neither took into account or spoke to. Rather, it reinforced all the racist, stereotype myths about blacks residing in its white readership and continued to view the Caribbean territories as ex-colonial possessions.

In the 1950's, Claudia Jones, born in Trinidad, produced the *West Indian Gazette*, a political newspaper which was the first serious attempt to speak to the preoccupations of the newly-arrived immigrant work-force making its way 'in a strange land'. It lacked a mass readership however, largely because this community had not yet expressed a total social and political presence in the British arena.

In 1967, *The Hustler* surfaced as a national black newspaper. It was edited by Courtney Tulloch, a Jamaican and Naseem Khan, an Anglo-Pakistani. It surfaced in Ladbroke Grove and, it attempted to speak to the new militancy of the young and unemployed. The Black Power explosion of this period produced political organisations and newspapers from the various black communities up and down the country: *Freedom News* (Black Panther Movement); *Black Voice* (Black Unity and Freedom Party); *Flambeau* (Grove Youth Group); *Uhuru* (Black Peoples Freedom Movement); *Grass Roots*

(Black Liberation Front), to name but a few. They militantly confronted the oppressive forces that the community had been facing since its arrival, particularly the police force, the education system and employers. By the early '70's, these papers were appearing spasmodically or had declined. The major reasons were police harassment of the street-sellers and, later, the ideological crisis of these organisations.

This was the period, however, in which the black community registered its presence, enriching all areas of life in Britain, establishing itself as an independent political force to be reckoned with. A generation of black youth was in the British schools, reggae music was being played on the BBC and British athletic and football clubs could not ignore the home-grown black talent on its door-step. Some blacks had penetrated local government and other professions and a few owned small business establishments.

It is against this background that, in 1971, *Westindian World* surfaced as the first popular national weekly newspaper this community has produced.

## ITS STYLE AND CONTENT

*Westindian World*, applies the format successfully established by the 'popular' dailies of Fleet Street, to feature black life. Thus, its news pages feature issues, both British and international, of interest to black people. The gossip column, 'Me Hear Dem Say', is written in Jamaican dialect and provides readers with juicy tit-bits, scandalous revelations, and sarcastic comment on well-known personalities and events in the black community. Clues of the quizzes and crosswords use names of famous black personalities, Third World countries, black history or black music. The entertainment page features black super-stars, latest reggae and soul record releases and what's on in the club circuit. Black sporting personalities and teams appear on the sports page and the paper runs two competitions for amateur black cricket and football teams. The woman's page has black recipes, fashion, articles on 'women's issues' such as abortion and child-care and it features 'successful' black women. The pin-up pics are of black ladies. Their advertisements publicise businesses that have established themselves in Britain, products aimed at a West Indian market and carry job vacancies in search of black personnel.





In the true spirit of crusading journalism, each issue usually highlights cases of discrimination, neglect or abuse in the community. For example, it has campaigned on behalf of the hundreds of black families who lost thousands of pounds in the Pyramid Swindle (4 February 1975); against faulty paraffin heaters which cause the death of several children (16 January 1976); against the indifference of the Social Services to black old-age pensioners who die each winter from hypothermia (5 March 1976) and for black children needing foster-parents – The Soul Kids (18 July 1975). It has also attacked the high rate of unemployment amongst black youth, indicted an education system which churns out illiterate and unqualified youth, given coverage to cases of police brutality which have angered and, at times mobilised, the black community, such as the recent Cricklewood 12 case (27 June 1975) and the Cliff McDaniel case (16 October 1975).

Then there are its own campaigns on the political issues of the day: urging blacks to vote for a Labour Government (27 September 1974); supporting the candidacy of Michael Foot for leader of the Labour Party (26 March 1976); calling for black M.P.'s (30 January 1976) and, last but not least, supporting the campaign of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Robert Mark, for blacks to join the ranks of the police force (31 October 1975).



Readers are confronted in the pages of the *World*, from issue to issue, with a mixed assortment of articles and comment that are both confusing and contradictory. The main criterion the *Westindian World* editors seem to have for deciding the content of the *World's* pages is, that the stories and information should concern black people anywhere in the world. The political perspective often seems irrelevant.

In one issue (11 July 1975), side by side with an article in which Samora Machel, President of Mozambique, outlines Frelimo's ideological and economic development, readers are told that 20 Sudanese civil servants are coming to Britain to study management. Over the page there is a feature on a black magistrate who urges black people to be more competitive and to return to the Caribbean to



help build up businesses.

The centre-spread commemorates the launching of the WIW's 'Who's Who' 1975/6, a directory of the black communities' notables and worthies. They all gathered at the London Hilton Hotel for the celebration and readers are provided with the following glowing description: "There was Dr Arthur Wint, Jamaica's High Commissioner sturdy as an oak. . . Sir John Carter, peering through his glasses. . . his wife, the eternally youthful, Lady Sarah Lou Carter. . . Mr Hemmings of the Spathodia Land Corporation, his Sandhurst-style moustache looking in splendid shape. . . Roy Sawh, sporting one of the latest and most attractive suits. For once Roy is without his celebrated harem. . . George and Lorna St. Clair of the famous hairdressing salons. . . the powerfully built Cliff Lynch. . . Jimmy Byfield, Chairman of the West Indian Standing Conference. . . " and so on.

In the regular column – 'Libya Marches On' – amongst other items, the news is, that Malta is to assist in organising a glider race for Libyans; that university professors are to visit Libya; that the Pakistani Minister of Education, Science and Technology, has recently departed from there.





(Why Libya appears with such regularity remains a mystery.)

Police brutality and frame-ups are constantly attacked and yet blacks are regularly urged to join the police force. In 1974, *Westindian World* went to great lengths to explain why black people should give their votes to the Labour Party, only to later tell readers to, "give your vote to those candidates who are willing to stand up for the black man in the House of Commons." (23 April 1976) Idi Amin is praised for expelling Asians for their business practices in Uganda (26 September 1975) and yet West Indians in Britain are told to follow the example shown by some Ugandan Asians and develop business skills of their own (7 February 1975). Articles appear which praise community self-help projects and collective effort (10 October 1975). While great prominence is given to West Indian individuals who are moving up the ladder of success in Britain — the St. Clairs, the Vince Howards, the Witters, the Count Suckles, the Lord Pitts.

As for some of the news items, there is no rhyme or reason as to why they appear in the pages of the *World*. Readers are told, for example, that East German sportswomen are masculine (13 August 1976); that two women who were arrested at Miami Airport had cocaine in their girdles (13 August 1976); that the Borough of Camden is to have a bus-lane (8 August 1975); that a 124 year old black midget exists whom the *World* intends to interview (18 October 1974).

This content does not assist the mass of its black working class readership to develop a point of view on important issues and events that preoccupy them in Britain or the rest of the world. And what of the Caribbean coverage, bearing in mind that it speaks to a population that has a material connection to the mass of workers there? Readers are usually fed a diet of articles, official press-releases and re-prints from the various Caribbean papers which support the ruling parties. Occasionally information of the opposition to these same parties will appear. They produce supplements on the various Caribbean territories which, as well as promoting tourism and local business, are blatant mouth-pieces for the ruling parties' programmes and activities.

## ITS POLITICAL POSITION

*Westindian World* plays a definite role in the arena of black politics in Britain. It exploits in its pages the anger and frustration of their readers to the individual acts of oppression by police, Social Services, schools and industry, without attacking the system which perpetrates them. Their basic political position is, that racism pollutes every area of life, "from the Government down to the most rancid wino"; that its institutions reinforce racism and this provides the major obstacle to black progress. This being their case, what political solution do they advance?

As we have shown, *WIW* has carried a number of campaigns in its pages geared towards urging a black presence in Britain's local and central power structures. Clearly, they believe that the only way for-



ward for the black community in Britain is through black participation in these structures.

Thus, in October 1974, on the occasion of a General Election, readers were urged to vote Labour. Why? Because, "... the need of the hour is to strengthen Parliamentary democracy, not weaken it. For when Parliament falls, the fall of Britain will be complete. We urge you to vote for the Labour Party for it seems to us they are the Party with the strength, will and purpose to restore Britain to its true greatness".

Earlier in the same year, they posed their desire for black Members of Parliament with a front-page lead article which demanded, "10 Black M.P.'s for 1979". Still in pursuit of this dream, in February 1976, when a Tory MP also expressed the need for such a presence, their editorial commented: "John Fraser, M.P. must be praised for enlightening this government and the indigenous population of the urgent need for black Parliamentary representation".

And, Sir Robert Mark's major campaign to encourage blacks to join the ranks of the police force, was spear-headed in the black community by *WIW* on the basis that:

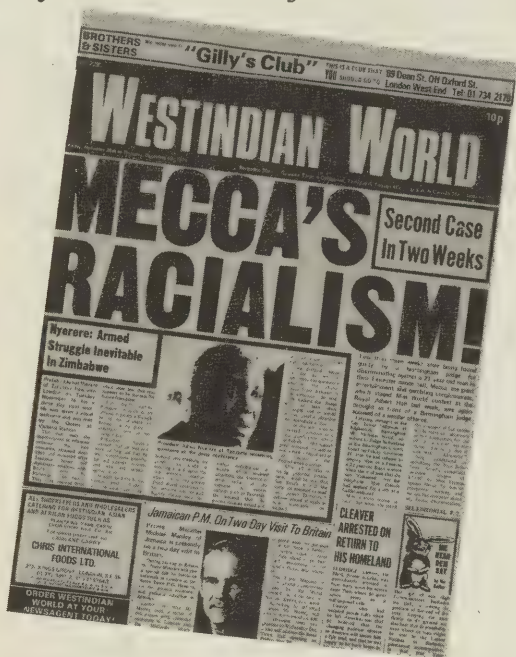
"... if today there is a widespread fear that the police — to put it mildly are unfriendly to black people, what better way to change this but from within. ..."





From where within the black community will the personnel come for this task? Already in Britain there exists a minority of small black business men, women and professionals — immigrant workers who have acquired social mobility through education or business acumen — who show a desire for going in this direction.

At this stage of the development of the black community this section is relatively powerless. It is struggling for recognition from the state it seeks to serve and from the working class it seeks to lead. Presently it is recognised by neither. *WIW*, itself a product of this section, now seeks to swell and strengthen its ranks under the guise of being a paper which speaks for the interests of the entire community. One of its editorials put it this way: *"What is wrong with our young people aspiring to better jobs and going to university? What is wrong with black people wanting to run businesses? How can we say we are fit for better jobs when we deride the very training that alone will entitle us to better jobs? How can we progress without more teachers, policemen, doctors, lawyers, and scientists? A prosperous well-educated middle class need not be a race of Uncle-Toms or sell-outs, for from its ranks will come the thinkers and men of action we so desperately need."* (7 February 1975)



The black working class has shown no desire to assist these programmes designed to pave the road along which the emerging middle class will travel. In fact, black youth, born or schooled in Britain, have provided the most overt expression of this rejection of the values and aspirations espoused by *WIW*. Indeed, they show an anxiety and willingness to subvert and destroy them.

The inconsistency in *Westindian World's* content and political position is because it issues from the weakest section in the black community — the emerging black middle class.

Until recently it has been the only independent popular medium in which the black community could find a representation of itself. Its continued survival owes much to this fact.

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at

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Contact: Steering Committee, c/o N.A.W.  
283 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.  
Tel: 01-892 1319

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"The Historical Experience of Black People".

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Course Tutor: Dapo Ladimeji.

This course will emphasise the unity and interrelatedness of Black Historical Experience and the importance of this for understanding the development of black people and their present situation. It will critically examine the conservative, nationalist and marxist views of black history, but will presuppose no previous knowledge. There will be a study weekend on 'Black People and British Society'.

Further information and prospectus from Cultural and Community Studies, 104-108, Bolsover St, London W.1. Tel: 01-636 4991 extension 33.

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Wandsworth Council For Community Relations

The WCCR community work team seeks a worker for its Battersea centre, to work particularly with the West Indian community and on advice giving. The successful candidate will have community work experience and first hand knowledge of problems facing the West Indian community.

Accommodation available.

Salary: £3042 (AP 2) plus £312 supplement.

Job specification and application form from:

WCCR, 57 Trinity Road, London SW17.

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### SENIOR PLAYLEADER

#### MOSS SIDE ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

Well established playground run by local group need a Senior Playleader to work with 4 full-time and 6 part-time play-leaders, and to be responsible for the co-ordination and further development of our play activities. These include adventure playground, pre-school play group, junior youth club, and holiday playschemes.

Applicants should preferably have experience of working with children and young people in multi-racial inner city areas.

Salary: negotiable from £3000. pa.

Closing date 23rd September, 1976.

Details from: The Secretary, M.S.A.P., Moss Side Peoples Centre, St. Mary's Street, Manchester, M15 5WA.

### WALLSALL COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

Do you have skills in handling the needs of West Indian young people?

Are you free for just four months in the first instance?

If so we would like to hear from you.

A newly formed progressive and highly articulate group of black people need your help immediately.

Salary: by arrangement.

The Work forms part of a long established multi-racial community group.

Further details: Contact.

Mr. J. Andrews, C.E. Wednesbury Road, Wallsall.

Tel: 0922-33863



# Race Today

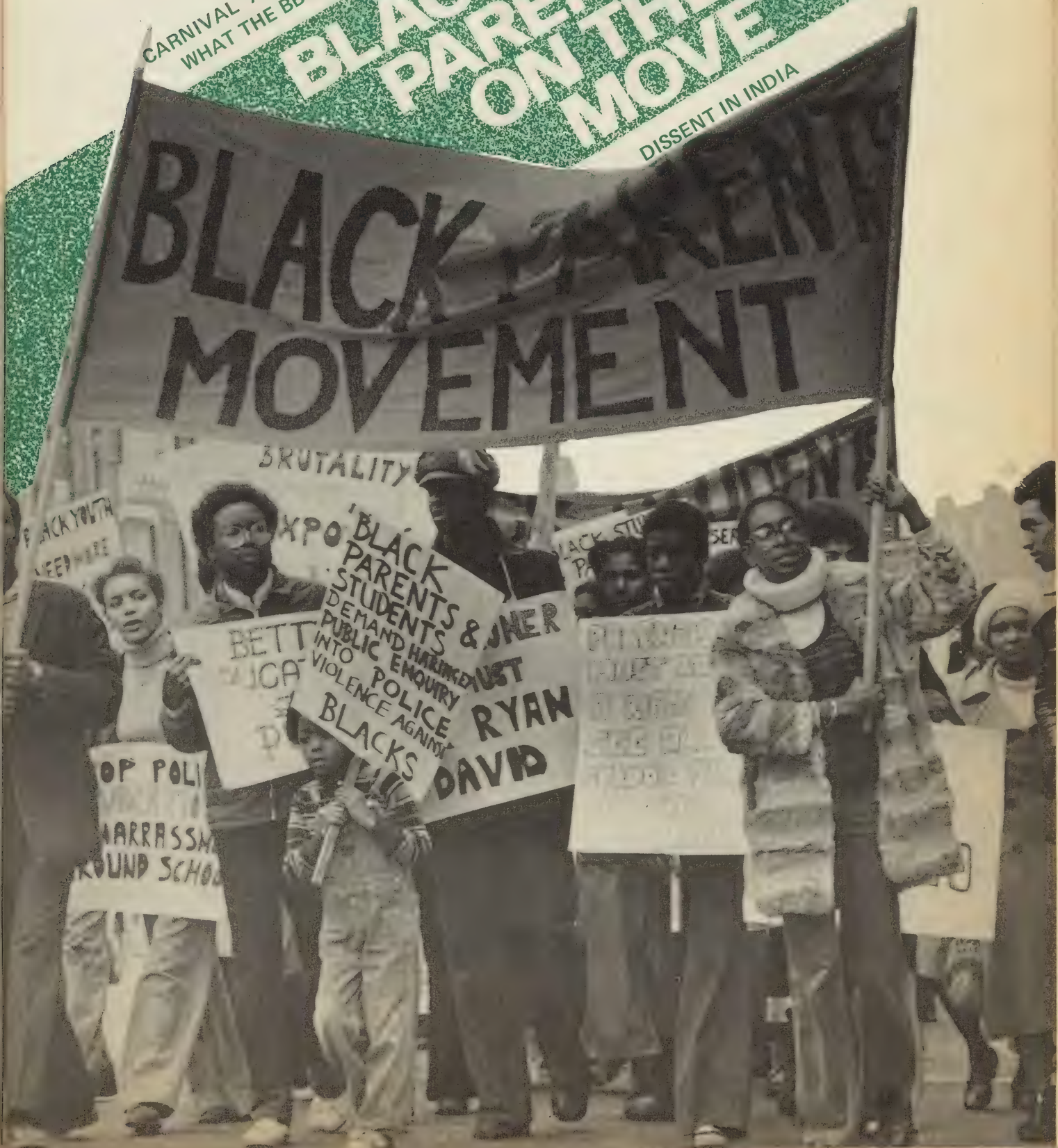
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OCTOBER 1976 25p

CARNIVAL '76:  
WHAT THE BBC DID NOT SAY

BLACK PARENTS  
ON THE  
MOVE

DISSENT IN INDIA





# LETTERS

## A ONE DAY STRIKE

Dear Race Today,

Regarding the speech of racist Powell, I think the "£1,000 send them home plan" is total rubbish. £1,000 won't be enough for each person. We want a realistic figure like £5,000 a head. That is realistic if Powell wants to get rid of us.

I like the work Mr Praful Patel is doing at the moment. He's always been a favourite of mine. I think all the immigrant leaders should hit out at Powell. For instance, why not take action? Action for one day, like staging a strike to show the racist and fascist groups what it's like without immigrants to do their dirty jobs. I say now and will always say, stage a strike for a day. Act now before it's too late.

Fazal Mahmood,  
Keighley.

## ZIMBABWE MEDICAL AID

Dear Race Today,

I write to ask if your publication would be prepared to help launch ZIMA — an organisation just recently formed with the intention of mobilising *material medical aid* for the Zimbabwean people displaced to camps in neighbouring countries, particularly Mozambique, where medical facilities are minimal. The aid is both to the refugees in camps as well as to the active guerilla forces. ZIMA also aims to publicise the Zimbabwean side of the struggle, at present neglected by the media. The committee is now made up of Zimbabwean and other doctors with associated health workers.

ZIMA will continue to be necessary in spite of the present political climate as the camp conditions are most unlikely to improve even after a settlement and the guerilla war will in all probability intensify in the face of the present proposals and vast sums of dollars meant to salvage a capitalist economy. We are non-sectional and are working together with the various liberation movements.

Any donations readers may want to make can be sent to ZIMA c/o Lloyd's Bank, Colmore Row, Birmingham.

Dr. K. Cruickshank,  
East Birmingham Hospital,  
Zimbabwe Medical Aid.

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# EDITORIAL

## NOTTING HILL AND AFTER

Where do we go from Notting Hill? The answers to this question might not be as clear as we would like them to be. However, one thing is certain. The open defiance to our rulers and their representatives, which young blacks displayed on the streets of Notting Hill, shows that a whole period in the history of our presence here in Britain has come to an end. A new stage is about to emerge.

The events of Notting Hill are not the sole reason why we make this claim: Hardly had the cries of that battle died down, when 400 young blacks in Birmingham marched on police stations in that area, on two separate occasions, demanding the release of their arrested friends. A brick smashed through the window of Handsworth police station, and paraffin was at hand to support the threat to burn the station down.

On each occasion, the youth secured the speedy release of their brothers and sisters who were being held in custody.

Three weeks later, black workers — Asian and West Indian — at the Ford car factory in Dagenham, East London, were in the majority of a group of car workers who destroyed equipment in the body plant, to the tune of £20,000. The reason? The Ford management attempted to lay-off the night shift at 2 am, with loss of pay to the workers. Hundreds of policemen were brought to surround the plant.

Side by side with the events described above, we have, in the pages of our journal, recorded the build up to these events, in a whole series of small battles fought by different sections of the black community.

And no one, at least in the black community, will be surprised should any of these open statements of defiance and rebellion repeat themselves in any black community throughout Britain.

Equally, no one can point to any period in the history of our presence here in Britain, when events, of the kind described above, have taken place in such rapid succession, and with such uncompromising hostility on the part of the rebels.

What have others said or done in response to these events?

Firstly, the *West Indian World* has been the only voice in the West Indian community to publicly oppose the actions of young blacks on carnival day. (See page 213.) The point of view of *West Indian World* on this issue has little support in the black community.

Large sections of the national press, from whom we expect the least support, did not use the opportunity to launch attacks against the rebels. In fact, some of their reports have been quite favourable.

Apart from organised racists — the National Front etc. — we have one resolution from a trade union branch of the printing union, SOGAT, in condemnation. It is the only statement of dissent so far to

come from within the white working class.

We monitor these responses because, at every stage in our struggle, it is necessary to identify who is organised for us and who is organised against us.

We turn finally to the government in power, against whom, directly and indirectly, our rebellion is focused. What is Jim Callaghan, our Prime Minister, proposing? What is the Labour Government's policy towards young blacks who are in open rebellion against having to live without a wage?

What have they to say to Ford workers, of whom 60% are black, who are refusing to accept the discipline of the management and the wage freeze imposed on them?

Or indeed, to Bengali workers who demand improved housing conditions in the East End of London?

Not to mention the question of police brutality and oppression by the courts.

They have a policy, but they dare not say it openly. To those without a wage, they offer nothing but continued wagelessness in the foreseeable future. To Ford workers, it is a freeze to the death. No money for housing, no money at all. And if you step out of line, there are always the police, magistrates, judges and prison, in fact the whole power of the British state.

Indeed, it is against the background of such a government policy that we begin to formulate the answers to the question, where do we go from here?

Governments concede nothing unless faced with a power as formidable and as powerful as the state which protects them. It is in the realisation of this fact that there is increasing discussion within the black community for a general strike of our workers. Others from a lofty intellectual position proclaim the need for 'peoples war'. We in *Race Today* rule out nothing.

What we need to do at this stage is to clear away a lot of the remnants in our own community, which tend to confuse the issues, which continue to blur the lines between those who are for and those who are against. We refer to the Bangladesh Welfare this, the Pakistani Association of that, the Jamaican what have you, their corresponding associations in the West Indian community and all those groups from the past, kept alive by the Race Relations industry.

The task now is to build from the ground upwards. Every factory, every community, every school must spawn new organisations. We will make a lot of friends along the way. The objective is simple. To use our power, formidably organised, to win what we want.

Race Today Collective Association October 1976



# BLACK PARENTS AND STUDENTS ON THE MOVE

BLACK  
PARENTS &  
STUDENTS  
DEMAND HASTY  
PUBLIC ENQUIRY  
INTO POLICE  
VIOLENCE AGAINST  
BLACKS

BLACK  
PARENTS &  
STUDENTS  
DEMAND HASTY  
PUBLIC ENQUIRY

POLICE  
TOP  
BACKING  
BLACK  
YOUTH

BETTER  
EDUCATION  
FOR  
BLACK  
PUPILS

BETTER  
EDUCATION  
FOR  
BLACK  
PUPILS



The Black Students and Black Parents Movements have been involved, particularly in the North London area, in organising unemployed youth, students and parents in the West Indian community into a force capable of waging a struggle against police oppression and the legal system. Not only has the *Race Today* Collective supported these organisations but our members are active in building both these movements.

We believe the experiences of both groups and the methods of struggle they are evolving are important in assisting others in building and developing similar organisations in black communities throughout the country.

To this end, we reproduce extracts from speeches made by parents at a recent public meeting held in North London.

I want to welcome all of you who have made it possible to come to this meeting today in connection with the struggles that the Black Parents Movement and the Black Students Movement have been waging over the last 18 months, more particularly over the last two or three months in connection with the education system, in connection with the police, in connection with the State. The purpose of this meeting is to inform those of us who are present about the cases which will soon be heard at the Tottenham magistrates court.

The Wood Green case will be heard at the Tottenham magistrates court from October 4 – 11. Now most people here have seen the leaflet which we published – the BPM and BSM published – called “Dem Police Again”. And some of you may have read the letter which we sent to the Home Secretary concerning that incident.

It is necessary for the people who are here present with us to know that we don't only take responsibility for these cases ourselves and the organising of these cases, but also we have been planning the political campaigns around those cases in the courts.

Besides the Wood Green case, there are four young school children who were arrested – as happens frequently – by the police in Oxford Street on what everybody calls ‘sus’, that is, suspicion of committing an arrestable offence. We have been working on this case as well during the last two to three months. And then there has been the case of the six women, including one schoolgirl, who were beaten up in the Harlesden area about two to three months ago, who have been to court already and there was a demonstration and a picket outside the court. When the incident occurred there were over 200 people outside the police station in the area and the BPM and BSM have been part of a defence committee which has been meeting in that area of London to deal with this particular case – the case of the six women who were beaten up in Harlesden outside the Burning Spear Club not long ago.

A speaker during this meeting will be dealing with

why we deal with the cases in the way we are dealing with the cases, because that's a very important point that we wish to make to the members of other organisations, to the members of our own organisation – the reason why we have been approaching the cases in the way that we have approached the cases. Because we think it is absolutely necessary to fight the immediate struggles that people experience, this immediate experience of police violence and the police oppression which is an everyday experience of the black community, and to fight that experience in a particular kind of way which gives self-confidence and organises the black community to fight its own oppression.

And finally, we have been involved, through a member of the BSM who was arrested, with the Notting Hill Riots 1976, also through our connections with groups of people in the area with whom we have been working in connection with the Notting Hill Riots. So, the meeting will attempt to give you some idea of what we are trying to do around these cases. We shall also ask you to contribute to the discussion of the meeting by asking questions, by discussing what we have to say, and we shall be very pleased to exchange opinions in the course of the meeting.

The BPM and BSM came into existence – for the information of those who are unaware – on April 17 and 20 of 1975, just after the arrest of a black student. The organisation which we got going at such short notice was only possible because of the work that black students and black parents had been doing around the area in connection with the black education movement and the black education struggle. Like all other organisations we have faced our crises and overcome them. We have been faced with our internal struggles inside our organisation and we have clarified our ideological position, and we hope if not before the end of the year, early next year, to organise our conference to put out our documents concerning the position we have taken as a result of the experience we have had during these two years of work.

## WHERE WE STAND

We believe at this important period where the black working class faces strikes, unemployment in the railway and the post office, where the youth and older black working class is in constant conflict with the police and education authorities, with the State at every level, through individual acts of oppression that we suffer, through this capitalist system of oppression, that at this particular moment, it has become necessary to clarify for ourselves where we are going and how we intend to go about what we are trying to do.

We stand for the independent, black, radical and revolutionary organisation of black people. We stand for that and we also stand for linking our struggles with other groups in the society – linking our struggles together and working out our ideological position as we link our struggles together. We see the country today as a country of nationalities – the English, the Scots, the Welsh, the Irish, the Greeks, the Blacks and the Asians, which would also include the Indians, the Pakistanis, the Bangladeshis. And we know that inside each of these nationalities, there is—



an internal struggle that takes place between the oppressed section of that group and those [of the group] who are prepared to use the State against the interests of those who are oppressed. . . .

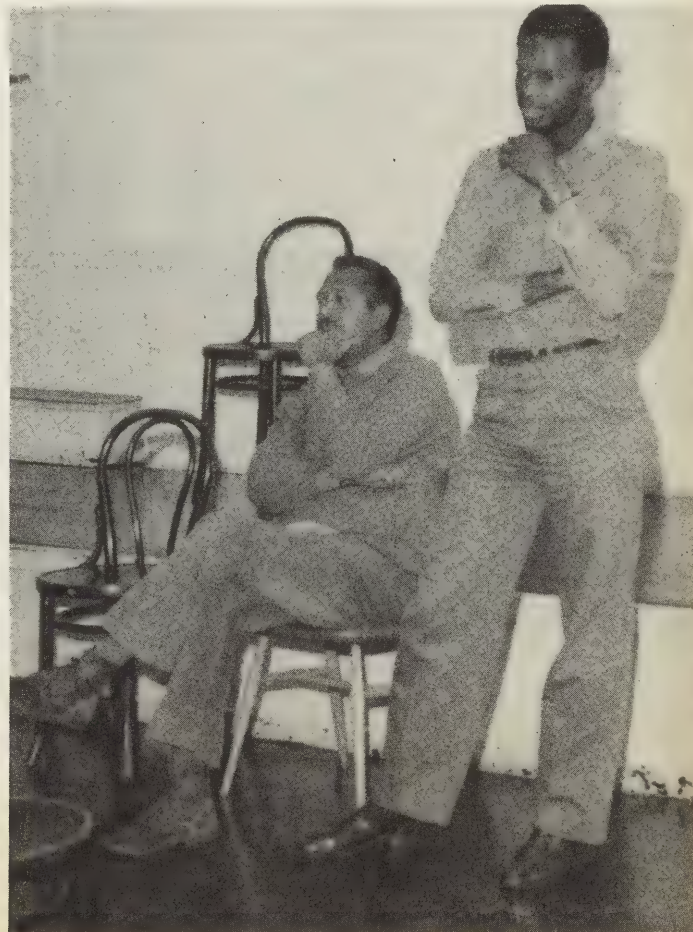
The point, which the last speaker has mentioned, that I want to emphasise, concerning the cases of those involved in the Notting Hill Riots, is this. He said there were certain organisations who are involved in community services who were in some way responsible for the campaign around those cases. It is necessary to point out two things in connection with this. The first is the BPM and the BSM are taking a stand, a position, with regard to the Community Relations organisation, the Community Relations Commission, the Community Relations industry. The stand which the BPM takes is, that the Community Relations organisation and the Community Relations industry is a kind of colonial office for the black community in this country, which seeks to undermine the independent organisational activity of the black population in dealing with its own struggles. We have seen how this has worked, and to some extent it has succeeded in undermining the independent organisation of black people in various parts of London. It's paid for by the State, in the sense that the State pays for the Community Relations industry and the Community Relations organisations at a price that is cheap, considering the extent to which the State feels challenged by this constant activity of the black youth all over the country at this moment.

But it appears to be a new kind of objective that the state has had in introducing the Urban Aid Programme. In introducing the Urban Aid Programme, it gets housing through the black organisations even cheaper than the State normally pays for it at the present moment. This is to say, what does the State

have to pay for housing if the blacks live in hostels? It costs them less through the Urban Aid Programme to the black organisations who are responsible for carrying out that hostel programme among the black youth.

The other aspect that is important to observe, is the extent to which these organisations appear to be messianic organisations which take over from the people involved themselves in organising their own struggles to deal with the problems they've got to face. And, therefore, when these very organisations seek to mobilise at some later stage around any given issue, their capacity for mobilisation is not there because the youth in their court cases, their various struggles with the housing authorities, with their employment and so on, are not themselves organised to deal with these particular cases, and the Urban Aid messiah takes over, with the result that it does not allow for the organisation of the black community around their problems. It's important to point that out, to see the weakness of this approach to the question and to say why we are opposed to this kind of way of dealing with the problem.

Equally, when it comes to the Law Centres. It is not that we are against people who work in Law Centres or even against the people who are working in Community Relations. We take a stand because we see how they defeat the purpose of the black community, the black youth, the older black working class, the parents seeking to organise themselves to deal with their problems. That's why we take a stand against it. We point to the weakness of this kind of political approach to these problems and to the white left organisations who believe that the community relations councils are things to work with.





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# THE TRADE IN BLACK DEFENDANTS

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I would like to pick up on something that the last speaker has said, which is, that in the BPM we take responsibility totally for the organisation of our cases. There are particular reasons for this. Perhaps it might be useful to begin first by outlining the experience we have rejected and what that experience is.

Now, if you go to any magistrates court any day of the week you will get confronted with exactly the same scene. You arrive at the court. Outside in the foyer of the court, where you wait for your case to come up, it is always crowded with people. It will mostly be defendants, it will mostly be friends of the defendants who come along to the court to give their support. So everybody is there. It's total chaos. My way of describing it is as a cattle market. In the chaos outside the court you suddenly hear someone call out, 'is Douglas Smith there?' Or, 'is Rebecca So and So there?' This person who is calling out the names will turn out to be the barrister in the case. He doesn't know who he is looking for. He has never seen the person he is looking for before, and the defendant himself or herself doesn't know what he looks like and has never seen him before either.

They finally make contact because the barrister has been around shouting out his name and the defendant hears his name. They both meet.

The first thing the barrister will say to you is, good morning, my name is Mr So and So and your

solicitor has sent me along to present your case in court today'. He'll say, 'don't worry, everything is fine. Just leave everything up to me and we'll do the best we can'.

As a defendant you might say to him, 'well, look, you won't forget to mention the fact that the police did this to me, you won't forget to mention the fact that the police did so and so'. His response will usually be, 'yes, yes, yes, don't worry, just leave it all to me'. To cover himself even further he will say something like, 'between you and me, that magistrate's a real bastard. He doesn't like to be upset. He doesn't like any barrister to get up and attack the police. He doesn't like any barrister to suggest the police are lying or that the police have framed you. So I think the least said about that the better'.

So, on that basis you go into court. Five or ten minutes later the evidence has been presented, the magistrate says 'guilty', and the barrister begins to bargain for as light a sentence as possible, or as light a fine as possible, or as less of a suspended sentence as he can bargain for from the magistrate. Then he comes back to you and says, 'well, it wasn't such a bad result, *we* did the best we can'. That's that. That's the experience that people have everyday in the magistrates court, and that's the attitude the barristers have towards their clients.

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## DEALING WITH SOLICITORS

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Between the time you are arrested and the time you come to court you have to get a solicitor. You have to have a solicitor because a solicitor is the only one who is allowed to prepare your case to present to a barrister. A solicitor is the only one who can fix your court appearance — the date when you are to appear at court. He's the only person who can get important evidence relating to your case. So the function of a solicitor is an important one and it is one that is essential.

What is the reality of the experience that most people have when they actually come to deal with a solicitor? They don't know which solicitor to approach. They hear a name. They arrange on the phone with that solicitor for an appointment. They turn up on the day at the solicitor's office. The solicitor will see him if the defendant is lucky. If not, the person he will usually see at the solicitor's office will be a person called an articulated clerk. An articulated clerk is not a solicitor. It is usually a young man or woman who is training to be a solicitor, but most solicitors like to fob off what they call 'ordinary cases' on articulated

clerks who lack the experience and the expertise to present the cases properly. You go along with the articulated clerk who has to take a statement from you about what happened. He doesn't write down what happened. The normal method in a solicitor's office now is that it is done on a dictaphone machine. You tell him what happened, he repeats what happened into the dictaphone machine, the tape is made and sent up to the secretary and she types it out from the tape. It's called audio typing.

You might say to the articulated clerk, when you come to the particulars of your arrest, that when you were arrested, 'three policemen grabbed me, kicked me in my stomach, wrenched my arm up behind my back etc'. The articulated clerk will respond, 'so would it be right to say that you were roughly treated by the police', and when you say yes, that gets translated on the tape, not as how you described, but as, 'I was roughly treated by the police', which in no way accurately represents the facts of what happened.

At the end of your interview you go away and your case is left in the hands of this firm of solicitors, in



the hands, more particularly, of an inexperienced articulated clerk. When you go away from there you start to remember things that you haven't told him. You start to remember people who were there and names you could give him of people who could be witnesses, who could assist and strengthen your defence. You try to get back in touch with your solicitor. Time and time again you phone up the office and ask to speak to Mr So and So, only to be told that Mr So and So isn't there, or Mr So and So is engaged, and they're not available at the moment. So it's almost impossible, in fact, to get through to your solicitor to tell him important matters concerning your case. What you have to do in the end is to leave a message, and it's an important message, because it concerns your case and you hope that this

message is going to reach the person who is responsible for organising your case. This happens right up to your court appearance.

If you're very lucky you might get another interview with a solicitor. But, by and large, in these offices that handle legal aid cases, you usually get to see the solicitor once only.

You will get a letter, just before you are due to appear in court, saying that you are reminded that your court appearance is going to be on such and such a day, and the solicitor has organised for a barrister to be there, his name is Mr So and So, and he will contact you at the court on the day of your appearance. This is the entire experience from the moment you get arrested, and basically, this is the experience that the BPM and the BSM have rejected.

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## HOW WE ORGANISE

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We are involved at the moment in a number of cases. We are involved in these cases because we believe that there is another way of fighting these cases, that the collaboration that exists between the court, the police, the solicitors and the barristers can be fought. In being involved in these cases, we have had to surface and evolve certain principles of organising around these cases to get the most effective result — the result that we want.

The first principle we have when we become involved in any case is that the defendants themselves have to take control for the organising and preparation of their cases themselves. When a person gets arrested, he can't do that alone, and usually if it's a juvenile or young person his parents will be involved. When we approach cases we want the parents, and the friends of the defendants all to be involved. The first thing we do is to take statements from everybody concerned. We take these statements ourselves. As I've said, normally, the solicitor is the one who will tell you that he is responsible for taking your statement. We say no. We take our own statements, we satisfy ourselves that these statements accurately represent the incident that has just happened. Only when we are entirely satisfied with these statements do we begin to deal with the question of choosing a solicitor.

Our experience is that there is no such thing as a good solicitor. Not anywhere is there such a thing as a good solicitor. The attitude of a solicitor is that he is the professional, he is the expert and he knows best, much better than you, how to organise your case. In fact, as far as he is concerned, the less you become involved the better for him. He will want to organise your case as though you don't exist. The moment we begin to present that we know best about our own cases, that we know best ourselves what happened, we know best ourselves how to write down that experience, we know best ourselves who the witnesses are and we begin to tell him so, he feels threatened. As I have said, a solicitor is essential in court cases, so while we in the BPM and BSM are putting our energies into dealing with the preparation ourselves, we are having at the same time to deal with solicitors who resent what we are doing, who resent the challenge to their authority as being the experts,

who resent the challenge to their function. So they will try in all kinds of ways to undermine our organisation.

So, not only do we have to fight the case the police have got us into, we're also having to fight solicitors who try in all ways and means to undermine what we are doing.

I'll give you a few examples of this. A solicitor won't say to you directly that he will not take your instructions, because that is the service that a solicitor is supposed to provide, and it is the service for which he is paid. He won't say he won't take your instructions. What he will do is prevaricate, and make it very difficult, and in some cases ignore what your instructions are. Now, in the case of the four people who were arrested in Oxford Street, for example, in that case, we instructed the solicitors involved to organise for a particular barrister in whom we have confidence, because he's been tried and tested in other cases and we have confidence in him. We instructed the solicitor to make sure and get that barrister for that court appearance. When the case came to court, and the parents and defendants arrived at court, a completely different barrister was there. Not the one that we'd asked for, somebody else whom we didn't know, whom we'd never heard of. The excuse of the solicitor was that at the last moment he discovered that the barrister we wanted was on holiday, and he didn't tell us this. We had no knowledge of this and therefore no chance to turn round and have a rethink on who we wanted, and to get somebody else that we wanted.

The solicitor present at a meeting of defendants in a recent case was informed that the defendants wanted a particular barrister. His immediate response was, 'well, I've never heard of this woman, never heard of her, I don't know what her work's like and I myself will have to check this out'. Now this had the effect of undermining the confidence of the girls, the defendants themselves.

The way he [this solicitor] wanted to present the case in court was to separate those girls who have no records, no previous convictions, from those girls who have a lot of convictions, because he said that the magistrate will be much more sympathetic to those



girls with no previous convictions. Therefore the barristers of those girls with no previous convictions would be the ones who would do most of the talking, and all those girls who have got previous convictions would keep their mouths shut and not say anything. After he left we discussed this and its implications, that, in fact, this kind of defensive strategy that the solicitor was proposing really weakened and undermined our whole case. And as it turned out we rejected that, but what he began to do, just by his very presence, was to undermine our own organisation on the basis that he himself was the expert and that he himself knows best.

What I am saying is that we begin by involving defendants and parents; we take our own statements and we hold regular meetings around the cases from every stage right up until the case comes to court.

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## MOBILISE THE COMMUNITY

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The other aspect of case organisation that we believe is absolutely necessary is the mobilisation of the community in which we live — to inform them of what is happening, of what we are doing, in order to combat what is happening. One of the first things that we do, as we have done in the case of the Wood Green 18, as we have done in Harlesden, as we did in the case of Cliff McDaniell, as we did with four black schoolgirls who had been arrested by the police in a school in Hackney, also last year, is to produce a leaflet, and these leaflets are very important because what we hope to do in these leaflets is to present the case of the defendants themselves so that the defendants are allowed to tell the story of what

happened themselves. We know that we can't rely on the newspapers to do this for us, and that whatever we read in the newspapers about the incident is a total distortion of what happened. So, it is important that other members of the community, who have to rely on newspapers as their only source of information, can rely on another source of information, and that is our leaflet.

We also organise meetings like this one this afternoon so that we can say what we are doing to other members of the community, so that other parents can speak about what their experiences have been, and so that the defendants themselves can also talk about what their experiences have been.





# FILE A COMPLAINT

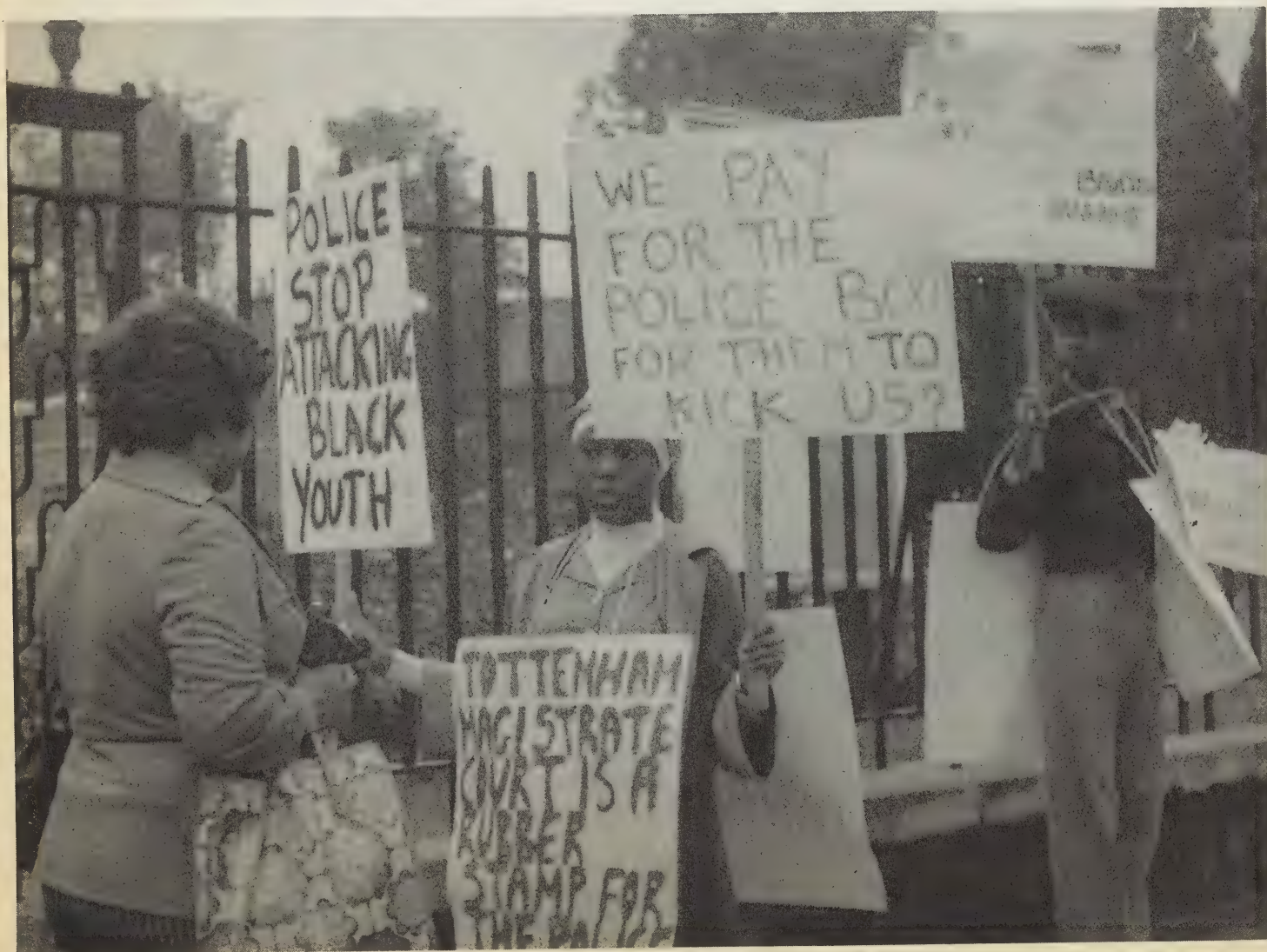
We also write letters of complaint. We write to the Home Secretary, because the Home Secretary is the person who is responsible for the police. He is responsible for their recruitment and he is responsible for their actions. We also write a letter of complaint to the Commissioner of Police who is, at the moment, Sir Robert Mark, and in the case of students, in the cases we have been involved in where school students are involved, we write letters to the Education Authority about how the police have conducted themselves, how the police are continually in the schools and around the schools harassing black students, and we want the Education Authority, who is the responsible body in the area, to take some kind of action on what is happening.

Another thing that I want to say something about is what happens when a complaint is made to the police. Whenever a complaint is made, the police have to follow up that complaint. They have to come around and they have to interview people and their witnesses who are making that complaint. This always happens after the case has come to court, never before, and never during. An inspector and someone else, usually a sergeant or other low ranking officer, are usually deputised by the Commissioner of Police to investigate the complaint. Now, the main thrust of the police, when they are carrying out in-

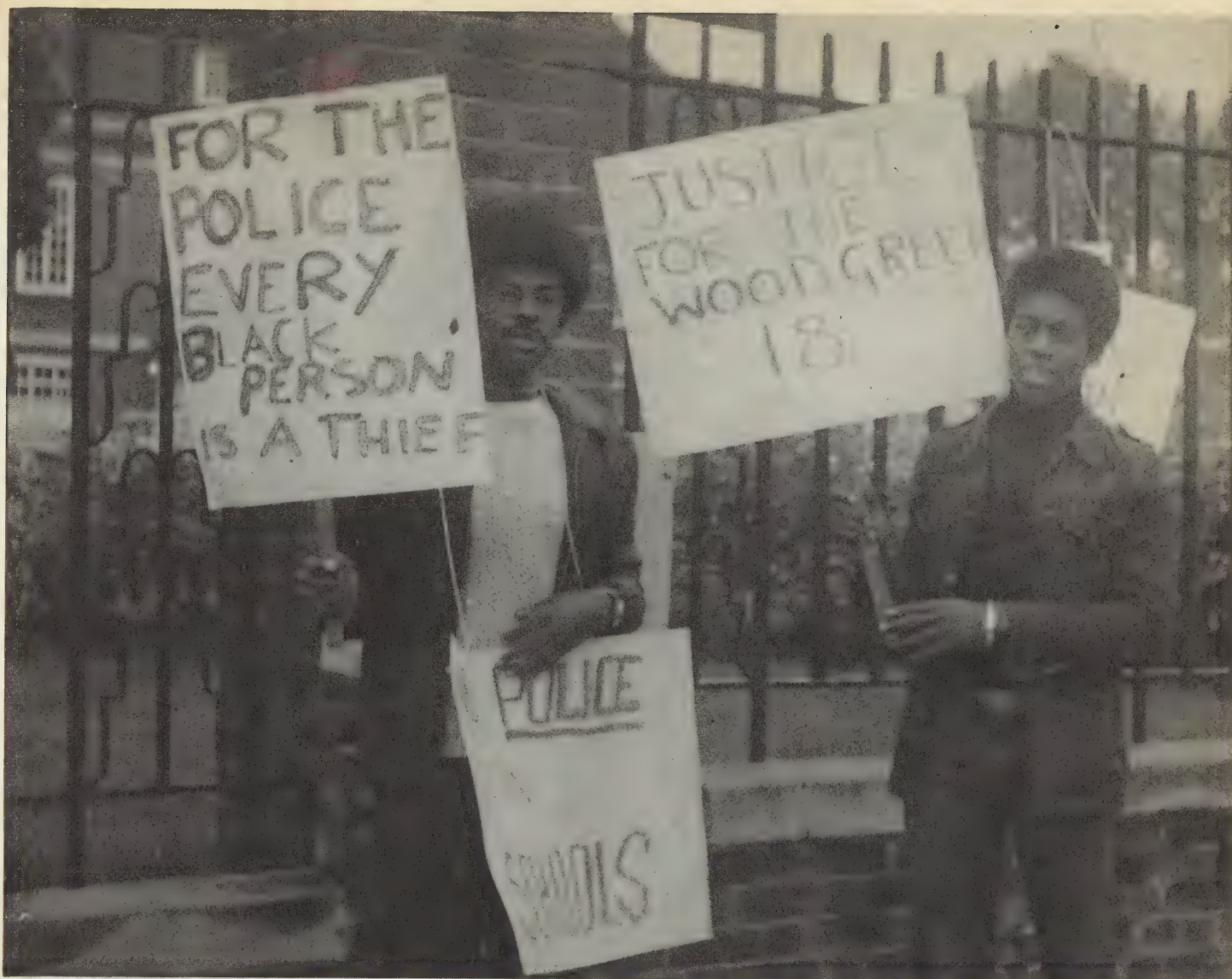
vestigations into these complaints, will be to persuade you to drop your complaint. In the past, the police have usually been very successful in doing this. They have been successful because they arrive at your house when you are alone, they see you on your own, they intimidate you on your own, so that you end up saying, 'alright I won't go through with it', and you drop your complaint.

We had an experience in the BPM in the case of S. We complained to the police about his arrest, the manner in which he was arrested, the beating that he received at the hands of the police at the point of arrest, which continued inside the police station itself. Because we had taken control over the organisation of that case, by the time it came to dealing with the police complaint, we were used to the kind of trickery that different state agencies use to undermine your case. So the same principle we used for the organisation of the case we applied to the police investigation.

We made an appointment with the inspector who was the officer in charge of carrying out the investigations. We made our own appointment with the inspector who had to turn up at our convenience to investigate, to talk to the witnesses concerned and to the complainant himself. The inspector turned up with his lower ranking officer half an hour earlier







than the appointed time. Fortunately, we had anticipated this, and we ourselves said that we would meet half an hour earlier because you know how tricky these people can be, and we were right, because half an hour before the time the inspector put in his appearance. That was the first thing.

At that meeting, there were the complainant, his parents and those of his friends who had been there at the time and witnessed the beating he had received and had witnessed his arrest, who were all part, an important part, of supporting the complaint. Before we met the inspector, we organised our own statements concerning the complaint and we made sure that the inspector was in possession of all the statements.

Well, all of us were there that evening, and the second thing that the inspector tried to do was to get us all out of the room under the guise that our presence was non-productive, and that he really couldn't carry out an investigation with all of these people in the room. The complainant said that he wanted us to be in the room, we were there at his invitation, his parents agreed that they wanted us in the room, the witnesses concerned also agreed that they wanted us in the room. So, the inspector couldn't force that one and he was defeated again.

The next thing inspector tried to do was to say, 'oh, unfortunately, I have made a terrible mistake and I have left all the statements that you gave me behind, I have come here without the statements'. We said,

'OK, fine, we will do some more statements now'. He sat there, him and his sergeant, and he had to interview everybody concerned, and he had to take the statements from them. That having been done, he started to pack them up. 'OK, well, I will be in touch with you when I have had a chance to go through these.' We said, 'no, we want those statements, they are our statements and our solicitors have a right to look at those statements, and when we are satisfied with them, we will let you have them back, we will let you have copies'. 'Oh that is all right', he says, 'I can make copies and send you copies'. We said it was no trouble for us at all to make copies and let him have them. So that on everything with the inspector, the usual trickery that they try to use with people when they are on their own was no longer effective, and the whole complaints procedure had to go. It was under our control instead of his control, as so often in our cases it usually is.

The kinds of experiences that we ourselves in the Black Parents Movement have come up against in organising ourselves, these experiences reproduce themselves over and over again, and it is only by taking these cases under our own control, by constant vigilance over the activity of barristers, over the activity of solicitors can we even begin to effectively deal with what we are up against. And that really is the purpose as to why the BPM organises in the way that it does organise.



# THE GROWTH OF A MOVEMENT

The methods we have been using and the importance of it should become absolutely clear as we go along. In the last year, in addition to the central experience which brought the organisation into existence, we have had all these other experiences with other black youth, either those we live with, those we are related to, those we meet, who are harassed by the police, who are arrested by the police. Police violence is the constant experience of the black community in Britain. The youth have it, the older working class have it.

Everybody has it on an everyday basis in the black community. It is one of the important sources of oppression of the black community in Britain at the present moment. But what is interesting is, that

when, about six months after we had been doing work in the BSM and the BPM, the police broke into a house, two members were able to take information as to who the police were, a complete record as to what the police had done, so that they could confront the police as to what was taking place. So, it was because of the experience they had had of the work of the BSM, that they had the confidence to do that and the ability to do that as well. And finally, we have to say that it is the black students who became involved in the Wood Green case before the black parents. It was S, it was T, it was V from the BSM who knew the people involved who took their own statements. Thorough, well prepared statements, on the basis of the experience we had had of working together — par-





ents and youths and students — in the last year. It is important to say that because the other section of the youth who are now working with us will become involved and they will learn, and they will be able to organise in the future to deal with police violence, to deal with police oppression.

It is a self confidence in the capacity of the youth to deal with the State and the most coercive section of the state machinery, the police. The most violent section of the coercive state machinery you have to deal with and that experience is important for us to understand.

One other point we wish to make. It is in connection with the black youth and the police and the experience in the courts which we have learnt ourselves from these cases. Frequently, what appears

to be the irresponsibility or the negligence of the black youth in these cases, hasn't got anything to do with either irresponsibility or negligence, but has to do with a deeply held view of the courts, of the schools, of the magistrates, of the judges. Because, on the whole, their political judgement is accurate. That you don't get justice from the courts, you won't get justice from the magistrates courts, you won't get justice from the high courts. So where the black community appears to be negligent, irresponsible, or not to care, as some parents say about the youth, it is because they recognise what the court is about, they recognise what the schools are about, they recognise what the judges are about, and they believe that there is nothing to counter that.

## NEW POLICE METHODS



What we have got to work together in discovering is our strength in dealing with these institutions. It is this policy which the last speaker has outlined which gives you some idea of the methods which we have been using to involve the defendants themselves, with their parents, with the organisation. The amount of statements we now have tells us the various strategies the police are using. For example, it should now be fairly clear that the police are not using the charges of riot and affray anymore. Take the Wood Green case. When we went to court on the last occasion in June, the police prosecutor said that the papers were with the Director of Public Prosecutions. We knew what that meant. We have outlined how the charges of affray are brought. All you have to get are a few people to say that they were threatened, and the police know how to get these statements and the police pass these statements to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Once those statements are in his hands, he usually brings charges of affray because of threatening conduct to the fear of the citizens. It is an old tactic that the police have been using. But the police have been losing affray charges whenever these have been taken to the higher courts. From 1970 in

the Mangrove trial, every major case of affray, including the Cricklewood case, the Bonfire case in Leeds, the police have lost those cases.

What they have done so far is to increase the original charges. One of the defendants who is here faces another charge of assaulting the police, with two others they put on two more charges of assaulting the police. Because in putting those charges they leave the case in the magistrates courts — the police courts — where they are more likely to obtain convictions. Most of the convictions that the black youths have, they receive at the hands of those magistrates. In the case of S we not only raised the issue with the Lord Chancellor, we raised the point that we were dissatisfied with the magistrates themselves and we will continue to raise that point in the future because we have said over and over, and I want to repeat, it is not just a question of justice when you go to that court. It is a question of police interests and our interests in the court. The magistrates are rubber stamps for the police, and each day of the experience of the black youth in the courts, of the older working class in the courts, confirms us in that experience — that the magistrates court are a rubber stamp for the police.



# INSIDE THE COURTS

Below, we report on two trials which have resulted from clashes between young blacks and the police in different areas of London.

## WILLESDEN

Day 1 at Willesden magistrates court, October 12, 1976. Rosa, Hyacinth, Monica and Virginia are all seated in the dock. On their left, Shirley and Olive, who are juveniles, sit with their parents. Facing them, raised on high, sits the Bench — three magistrates all with non-sense expressions ingrained on their faces. Behind the dock the public gallery is packed with members of the black community.

The prosecutor, sent from Scotland Yard, gets to his feet and outlines the police case against the six young women, "It is a normal case", he says, "of young people leaving a club and creating a disturbance which resulted in the police attempting to arrest them". He claims the police have been 'lenient' by not charging the defendants with affray and says he hopes that their defence will be conducted in the spirit of leniency and moderation shown by the police.

His first witness is PC Elliston from Harlesden police station who will detail the general outline of the police case. He gives his evidence and relies totally on his notebook to assist his story. He can remember nothing other than what is said in his notebook. If the information is not there his memory is blank. The defendants utter sighs of disbelief as Elliston gives a completely different version of the events. The girls, he claim, were among a large group of black youngsters on the street. They were knocking on doors and creating a disturbance. When he and other officers intervened, the girls threatened, abused and assaulted them.

Hyacinth and Rosa's barrister, Mr McDonald, confronts him head-on: that the initial contact came when a police officer attempted to drag a 13 year-old boy into the police car; that the boy's sister protested and police assault followed;

that other girls coming to her assistance met with increasing police violence from additional reinforcements.

Elliston denied it all. No such 13 year-old boy existed.

McDonald accuses Elliston: "You are a liar and perjurer, you are in court to concoct a story against these girls".

Friends, supporters and spectators in the public gallery sense the challenge and murmur their agreement. The prosecutor leaps to his feet with an objection to this line of cross-examination and says he

hopes that his "learned friend" is aware of the consequences of pursuing it. He sits down. McDonald rises and confirms that he is quite aware of the consequences, that he believes the police have concocted the entire case and he intends to show this. Shouts of "Ayee" and "true, true" come from the gallery. Up gets the prosecutor again and appeals to the Bench by saying that McDonald is trying to make the case a political one. The Bench reassures him that as far as they are concerned the case is an ordinary one.

Undeterred, McDonald continues the pressure and asks Elliston about his attitudes to young blacks. Elliston boasts in reply that he gets along fine with them and older blacks too. In fact, he says, he is a frequent and welcome visitor to their homes. McDonald turns the question around and asks him what the attitude of young blacks is towards him, and whether he has difficulty arresting them. Elliston looks less sure of himself and eyes the Bench and the prosecutor hoping for a rescue. The magistrates are visibly angered and a furious prosecutor leaps up and objects that McDonald is outside the law with his suggestions that Elliston is prejudiced.

The Clerk of the Court, whose function is to assist the magistrates on correct procedure, gets up and whispers to them that McDonald must not be allowed to continue and must be stopped. Even so, she is not sure whether McDonald is outside the law. A messenger is despatched to summon the Chief Clerk in the hope that he will provide the means to silence McDonald and, in the meantime, the Chief Magistrate accuses him of harassing Elliston. The tension in the court is unbelievably tight. McDonald replies by pointing out to her that, in this court, the reality of the police and the reality of the defendants are directly opposed to each other and he is there to represent the interest and reality of the defendants. Still struggling to establish the authority and control which has so far been denied her, she draws herself up and says, "yes, but it is our privilege". She gets no further. McDonald tells her, straight: "Madam, you do not have any privileges. You are here to do a job which is to implement the law. I am here to represent my clients which I intend to do and it has to be seen whether you will allow me to do this."

Now, here was some true talk. The Bench is silenced and defeated and the public gallery is electrified with delight and pleasure at the beating they have just witnessed. And the defendants themselves know that a sell-out is not on.

During the lunch time adjournment, news of the morning's events are the talk of Harlesden's black community. Willesden magistrates, who have a reputation amongst both clients and barristers for being the baddest in town, have met their Waterloo. This is a not-to-be-missed occasion and, in the afternoon, the gallery of the court cannot hold the numbers of people who want to be there.

Throughout the afternoon the case of the police shows obvious signs of crumbling but the prosecutor and the magistrates are powerless to perform their usual cover-up jobs. PC Taylor comes along to give his evidence and although he claims that he and Elliston were never out of each other's sight on the night in question, his story totally contradicts that of Elliston's. His credibility is shattered so severely under cross-examination that, when McDonald asks him to explain the appalling injuries Rosa received while under arrest, his lame explanation is that she must have got them when she collided with him or the pavement. The gallery roars with laughter.

This first day at Willesden court established for the magistrates, prosecutor and police the pace and rhythm of the defendant's defiance and their capacity to demand nothing less from the barristers representing them. Throughout the remainder of the prosecutor's case it has produced some spectacular and remarkable effects. On day 2, for example, as the police case collapsed even more, PC Taylor astonished all by fainting, quite literally, in a heap in the dock while being further cross-examined by McDonald.

Just before him, Elliston had been recalled at the request of the defence to explain why certain verbals, which he attributes to Virginia, appear in his statement when they are not in his notebook from which he claims to have made up his statement. He is forced to concede that he has no explanation. McDonald then drops a thunderbolt on him: "Officer" he says, "Do you know a Mr Mullins?"

Elliston looks horrified. The prosecution is thrown into a complete panic. They



know, as does everybody else, that Mr Mullins, a local black community worker, who has participated in trying to set up a police liaison scheme in the area, was, along with two other black youths, savagely beaten up by police officers from Harlesden police station. He has charged and summonsed Elliston as one of the major perpetrators of the beating and a court case is pending. Fortunately for Elliston, he does not have to reply to McDonald but the damage has been done and his cocky assertion of the previous day, that he has good relations with black people, is blown.

The fainting of PC Taylor was timed beautifully. Those of us who witnessed it must be excused for not believing that it was anything more than "a good bit of acting" as someone in the gallery said. Indeed, he had been observed, in the foyer of the court earlier, laughing and joking with other policemen. Two hours after he is carried out of court, the prosecutor informs us that Taylor is suffering from 'nervous exhaustion' and

will not be fit for 48 hours. He then adds, to everyone's astonishment, that when Taylor returns, he cannot guarantee that he will not faint again when McDonald gets up to question him. Clearly, Taylor's fainting and his inability to stand-up to forthright cross-examination are connected.

Taylor does return. He has been obviously carpeted for contributing to the destruction of the police case. He enters the witness box and asks the bench permission to correct some of his "inaccuracies". His attempt to patch up things takes another hammering.

Once the prosecution closes their case, the magistrate is forced, through lack of evidence, to withdraw the charges of threatening behaviour against Virginia and Monica.

Confronted by the strength and depth of the defence case's organisation, the prosecutor had been forced to change his tactics. He is no longer arguing that this case is a 'normal' one. He is reduced instead to accusing McDonald of deliberately

slurring the good name and reputation of the police. He accuses the defendants of conspiring to come to the court to tell lies about the police in order to save themselves. As proof of this he relies on browbeating them and their witnesses with their previous convictions. He tries to show that, as they are "convicted criminals", it is safe to assume that everything they say is lies. For example, when Hyacinth is in the witness box, the prosecutor tells her that she has a conviction for criminal deception and, with the help of "outsiders", she has come to court to lie on the police. However, he is faced with the evidence of the 13 year-old who the police left out of their account.

Verdicts against the police are as rare in magistrates courts as is the kind of battle in the courts described above. In this case, its organisation and presentation has been a victory in itself, in which the black community has been able to see and experience that magistrates and the police are not all powerful, and that when they're hit they fall.





Monday, October 4, 1976, 10am, at Tottenham magistrates court. It is the first day of the case of 18 black youth and school students, known also as the Wood Green 18. All are present. They face various charges of obstructing the police, assaulting the police, threatening behaviour and causing malicious damage.

The corridors outside the courtroom are packed. Besides the defendants, parents are present and many friends of the defendants, some of whom have skipped school for the day to be there. Excited talking and shouted greetings to new arrivals raise the noise level. Harassed police officers have to abandon efforts to make themselves heard as they call out the names of defendants to check that they are present.

The barristers arrive. It's clear that most of them don't have a clue who their respective clients are or what they look like. They are reduced to shouldering their way through the crowd, shouting names, trusting to a miracle to make contact with the right defendant. Defendants are equally in the dark as to who their barrister is to be. The majority have never seen them before this day, and some, who have left the organisation of their cases to legal-aid service groups in the community, don't even know whether they will have any representation at all.

Amidst this chaos the news seeps through that there will be no joint trial. The Director of Public Prosecutions (the office which prepares police prosecutions) and the police have decided that it is in

their best interests not to deal with 18 defendants together. In the weeks leading up to the case this intention has been kept from the defence. Only six defendants are to be dealt with today — Danny Errol, Vernon, Hopeton, Joseph and Cameron. The rest are given new dates for their cases and told to go home.

In the next four days the cases of these six young men are played out. Danny and Errol have been in borstal (prison). Their parents have been involved with the Black Parents' Movement and the Black Students' Movement in the preparation of their cases. Their statements are thoroughly prepared and they have managed to have several meetings with their solicitors and barristers before coming to court. Members of BPM and BSM also organised a picket at the court while the cases were going on, and many parents of defendants sought their advice and assistance as it became more and more obvious that there had been no case preparation around any of the other cases.

Joseph and Hopeton have never seen their barristers before and have no idea what they will be putting forward in their defence. Vernon has no barrister at all and no solicitor either and his father decides that he will take on the task of defending him himself. Cameron is given a different barrister almost everyday, one of whom cannot even remember his name after spending the morning session supposedly defending him.

The performance of the defence barristers throughout was at best lame and, at worst, no defence at all. In fact, it is true to say that the prosecutor, the police and the magistrate had full run of the entire proceedings. On the second day, for example, one of the barristers made an

attempt to examine a police officer on his attitudes to young blacks. The magistrate intervened and told him in no uncertain terms that he was "wasting the court's time", and he had best shut up. He did. On other occasions, when police officers giving evidence found the going heavy, the magistrate would step in to help them out. Inspector Tanner from Hornsey police station was in obvious difficulties when asked to identify Joseph and was saved by the magistrate who pointed out Joseph at the crucial moment by telling him to sit up and stop hiding himself. Joseph was doing no such thing. The witness, who preceded Inspector Tanner, PC Rood, had arrested Joseph and claimed Joseph had assaulted another officer. Rood was asked to identify Joseph and picked out Danny. Clearly the magistrate did not want the inspector to embarrass himself in the same way.

Predictably, the magistrate handed out guilty verdicts to all with the exception of Vernon. Danny and Errol return to borstal to await sentence from the Crown Court, Joseph is to be sentenced at a Juvenile Court on November 3, and Hopeton is fined £50 for each assault and told to pay £20 towards the cost of the case.

Since then, six more defendants, including three juveniles, have had their cases dealt with and were found guilty. The pattern of the first case has repeated itself. Indeed, the prosecutor, who sussed in the early days that the level of organisation around the case was almost non-existent, has not even bothered to call all his police witnesses when other defendants have come up before him. And, with the defendants all split up, he has been able to get away with dealing with each case as individual incidents of assault, obstruction or threatening behaviour. In this way he was able to conceal what a larger case would show — that several police units, amongst which were at least two elite and highly trained Special Patrol Group Units with 20 officers in each, had been called to use their specialist skills to deal with the youth.

The most important feature of the cases so far heard has been the resistance and defiance of the youths themselves in the court. Danny & Co. kept up a constant chat with friends in the public gallery and at times showed complete contempt for the proceedings by playing cards in the dock. And Danny clearly following the example set by the magistrate, tried to assist one of his witnesses by calling out to her. The magistrate cleared the court. In the foyer of the court, their friends constantly taunted and jeered at police officers. At one point fireworks were let off in the court as the youth generally showed that they had no respect for the place. Cameron arrived very late one morning and when his surety asked him for his reason, he told him, "man I was having a good sleep".





# SPEEDING UP THE BAIL PROCESS



On two occasions recently, the youth of the West Indian community in Birmingham have been able, in a few hours, to secure the release of their members who were arrested at police stations in the area.

On the first occasion a group of young blacks were returning to their homes in Handsworth after visiting a club in Small Heath. As they went through the town centre they were stopped, questioned and harassed by police. An attempt was made to arrest one of them who had an ashtray in his possession. A fight broke out and seven were forcibly taken to the main police station in Steelhouse Lane. Those who got away went into Handsworth to tell their friends and associates what had happened. They went to a haunt of the unemployed and a decision was taken to marshall 'community leaders' and other friends to demonstrate outside the police station.

*"I was here (in a restaurant) when a youthman come and he tell me what happen and that the police arrest seven people. I ask him what they do, and him say, they never do nothing, is the police. And we decided, well, we goin' to do something, and get them out."*

Some 300 West Indians marched from Handsworth to Steelhouse Lane police station and refused to leave until those arrested were released.

*"Well, the 'leaders', you could say that they went in to negotiate while we, we stay outside and mek noise and mek it clear that we not moving until they let them go."*

This action forced the police to release those detained at half hourly intervals, and at 6 am, just three hours after the incident, all were out.

The second confrontation occurred at 10 am when the police invaded a house in the heart of the black community, Handsworth. They claimed that they were looking for a suspected burglar. They met with violent resistance, particularly from the three young women who occupied the house. They used boiling water and a hot iron to defend themselves. Finally,

after police reinforcements came, all the inhabitants, three girls, two men and two children were dragged, in various states of undress, from the house and taken to the local police station.

When this news spread through the community, some 80 youth gathered outside Thornhill Road police station and demanded that those arrested be released.

*"We stood outside the police station, and the youth were angry. Some went and got paraffin saying that they would burn the station down. A house opposite was having some building work done and some took bricks and stones and threatened to smash up the station. Someone smashed in one of the windows. The police got scared. Every now and then one of the youth would go in and tell the police to let the people go. A senior police came out and asked everyone to be calm. The police seal off the top of the road and some say that mounted police was in the park. The police say that one youth confess, and we say, well, let the others go."*

One of the girls arrested gives this account:

*"We were all put in separate cells and brought up at different times. They brought me up a few times and show me some stereo equipment and £80 in loose change and say they found it under my bed which was lie. But everytime they bring me up I could hear the youth dem outside and I feel good. . . and that is why the police let us go."*

In the afternoon, approximately five hours later, the police released the three young women and one man. The women each face seven charges of assault on police.

According to Police Superintendent, Joseph Matthews, head of the Handsworth police, the demonstrators did not understand the length of time which the bail procedures took.



# WHAT THE BBC DID NOT SAY

BBC televised, on October 26, 1976, a documentary on the build up to Carnival and the events which took place on both days. In the course of filming, Our Editor, Darcus Howe, was interviewed by the BBC team. The televised version edited out some 99% of that interview. We tape recorded the entire interview at the time. Below, we print the unedited version.

*What is the significance or the importance of Carnival to Notting Hill Gate?*

There are several important factors depending on who you are, but I believe the most important one is this: there are a quarter of a million people on the streets for two days celebrating Carnival, 90% of them are black. Now when you are a minority in a country, a racial minority, and in 1976 when the racial question is in the open, a gathering of a quarter of a million black people is an important political event and, in my view, that significance is overwhelming above all else.

*Does that mean that it is very important that it should go well and harmoniously?*

More than that, because it means that the question of how it is policed, that is to say how the government responds to this gathering, how the local council responds to it, are not only important, but sensitive and can be extremely explosive. When you have a situation quite early this year in which there was a lot of talk about banning the Carnival, because a few whites were dissatisfied with it, that it caused a nuisance, then how that was handled, the responses to it by the police, the local council and indeed by the government were of tremendous importance.

*When you say a few whites objected, they do live there, they did live there first perhaps, don't they have some right to object? They say that, for example they were kept awake for days and nights on end.*

Wherever a quarter of a million people gather to celebrate it is going to be a nuisance to somebody, whether they gather at Lords, whether they gather at the Oval for cricket, whether they gather at Wembley for football, it is going to be a nuisance to somebody. But in modern society one hopes that people give and take. You believe, "well I am going to be around, it might be a nuisance but I will try to give it two days, it's not 364, it's not 365". We can't live in a modern society unless we learn that we must allow other people to establish themselves and do what they want

provided it is not destructive of the other. Nuisance is something that you have to put up with, destruction, well then you have a legitimate protest.

*Gatherings at Wembley and Lords may be a nuisance but not a nuisance of the order of keeping people awake for two days and nights on end.*

They keep people awake at Oval and Lords for five days. A test match lasts five days, and a test match with a lot of West Indians means a lot of activity and a lot of excitement, but what I want to say is. . . . .

*Sorry, they don't keep people awake at nights during the Oval or Lords do they?*

I don't know that they keep people awake in Notting Hill. Because when I left the streets, say on Sunday morning [last year], at about 12.45 there was nobody around. When I left the streets about 1.30 on Monday morning there was nobody around, so I don't know who was being kept awake when.

*Now, this year there are going to be 1,200 police we're told, last year it was 60.*

Yes, I mean the police behaviour began even before the 1,200 number was announced. They [the police] took the side of the small group of whites and said that Carnival must be removed. We in *Race Today* ran a campaign against them and there were some policemen in the area, not all of the policemen, who were saying that those who were in charge of policing this year were being very troublesome and would cause something dangerous. That's



Julian Stapleton



the first point. So all the policemen are not of one mind on this issue. Last year there were 60 policemen policing a quarter of a million people and you know there was not one single incident of violence recorded anywhere. This year, I believe because there is no policy by the Home Office, what happens on a Carnival day on policing depends on how sensitive the policeman in charge is, which I think is not sufficient. So if you have a good sensitive policeman as was the case last year we will have 60 officers. This year I believe you have a man who a lot of us know quite well, and I believe he sees this as his Dunkirk. You know, hardly ever is there a situation in which a Police Commander has got a quarter of a million people on his patch and a quarter of a million people who don't need policing, that's an insult. So he is trying to get some policemen together to institute a lot of petty bye-laws. That is all you can carry out during Carnival, a harassment of the population based on some petty bye-laws about drink and that is the most explosive one. Because the Carnival Development Committee tried to apply for a drinks licence for everybody.

*So that beer could be sold on the streets?*

Beer could be sold freely as it is in Trinidad, as it is in any reasonable place. The police opposed it. So that you are going to have a lot of people selling, not because they want to oppose the police, but because there are a lot of other people who need a drink. And I believe on that issue you are going to have a serious confrontation if the police introduce these petty bye-laws. I would say it ought to be done in this way. If there are a quarter of a million people and the event is as significant as I have outlined, then the Home Secretary must see to it that he meets the Carnival Development Committee. Not the police, because I don't vote for policemen. The Home Secretary must meet them. They must work out a policy so whoever is the Commander must toe the line between the two powers involved. The government, and the people, those are the two powers.

*If you feel that the policeman in charge this time is going for petty harassment as you put it. . . Why, to what end?*

Well I am not his wife or his psychiatrist. But what I would say is that from everything I have seen him do so far, he sees this as his last stand, his moment of glory, and you know there is little difference between glory and disaster. What one hopes is that the Carnival Development Committee will have executed their responsibility. We in *Race Today* have executed ours by letting a lot of people know what was taking place and how. We believe the police so far have not and if they don't on the day then, as we said in *Race Today*, the situation is likely to be pretty explosive. That is not a fear of mine you know because I believe we are quite capable of dealing with the Commander in charge, politically and otherwise, because I believe if anything happens after all we have said, written, publicised, talked officially and unofficially, if anything happens that's their fault.

*Just going back to one thing. You feel that it is unfair that you can't get a licence to sell drink on the streets.*

*But this is England, drink does not flow in the streets of England. It never has.*

You mean in white England. Now if you are governing me you ought to govern Carnival as well. You have to take into consideration when the laws of drink were written that West Indians were not here and Carnival was not established as a fact, and any sensitive government, you know, chop and change and they make some adjustments because a new body of people are here or the old has gone. If they want to stick to white England, if the police want to behave as though England was all white, if the Home Secretary wants to behave like that, sooner or later they are going to find that it is not. So what we are asking for is a change of policy on the question of Carnival and the organising of your laws and disciplines, institutional disciplines to take into effect that we are a unique people who have come here and we have a right to express ourselves within organised limits as we have shown over the last 11 years. (Interruption)

*I'll just lead you into the middle of where we were. You were saying that you feel a government should be sensitive towards this new community in our midst, go on about that.*

Yes. I was talking about the fact that we are here and we are part of this community and laws framed when we weren't here must take some adjustment and some change and the laws we were talking about were the laws of drink. And we recognised that and applied for a licence in order to prevent any kind of harassment on the issue and the police said no, so that I believe that the police are likely to interfere with us based on the fact that old England passed some laws which are inapplicable to new England. I think that is the essential thing.

*If the police do intervene and they do make arrests, either of people selling drink illegally or perhaps on the issue of the sound systems making more noise than is supposed to happen, what will result?*

I think the police know what will result. Notting Hill has a history of its own in relation to the police. Every single statement by the police about young West Indians indicate that we are not putting up with harassment. If there is an arrest on Carnival Day then it's going to be an explosion of a kind that hasn't been seen in this country before. I say that with no joy, I say that appraising myself of the facts, having a sense of history and an understanding of the situation as it is. It is going to be an explosion of a kind which everybody is likely to regret. What one demands is that the police maintain a low profile, 60, who by and large are there in a token fashion because they are not necessary. We can police ourselves, we can carry out Carnival according to our traditions without over-impinging on those of others. We have to impinge in some way as others have impinged on our lives.

*Are you optimistic?*

I'm never an optimist or pessimist, I'm a merciless realist and in that sense I face it as it comes, and if they make a mistake and the explosion comes I know which side I am on. I have already taken that side and we will act as we think fit.



# MEETING THE GLC

Since the Bengali Housing Action Group (BHAG) was formed in Spitalfields, London, in February this year, it has been fighting for the rehousing of Asians in areas where they are free from racist attack. BHAG and its member families have negotiated with the two state housing agencies responsible, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the Greater London Council.

On October 4 a delegation from BHAG was received by the GLC's Mr Tony Judge, Chairman of the Housing Management and Maintenance Committee. To support his side of the negotiations, Mr Judge had with him the officials responsible for GLC housing in the Tower Hamlets area.

In the course of the meeting, the BHAG representa-

tives outlined the case of Mr Maklis Ali (See *Race Today* July/August '76) who had been refused entry to a flat in the Mountmoress estate on Commercial Road by a gang of white tenants on the estate. Mr Judge was told that the group would make its own arrangements to ensure that such an incident did not occur again. The GLC officials conceded that the police had been of no help to Mr Maklis Ali. Their internal reports confirmed the story as it was told in *Race Today*. Mr Judge assured the delegation that the GLC was determined to prevent the setting up of exclusively white estates by gangs of their own tenants or anyone else. The BHAG delegation replied that they looked forward to these brave words being put into action.

The meeting agreed that BHAG would submit to Mr Judge a map of the areas in which Asians would accept housing in the East End. The accompanying map, which traces the areas in which the Asian community is capable of defending itself, was drawn up by the executive of the Bengali Housing Action Group on the basis of a survey which was carried out by the Group. The areas reflect the concentrated settlement of the Asian community in the borough of Tower Hamlets and include the electoral wards of Spitalfields, St Mary's, Redcoat, St Dunstan's, Holy Trinity, parts of Bethnal Green West, parts of Bethnal Green South and some estates in Shadwell, Wapping and Lime House ward.

The Bengali Housing Action Group stands for a policy of housing and rehousing of Asians in these areas and for the redevelopment of these areas with provision of new housing for the Asian community.





# DISSENT IN INDIA

On November 2, through the processes of parliament, Indira Gandhi's governing Congress admitted to the country and the world that India can only be ruled by her party under permanent emergency regulations. India's lower House of Parliament, the Lok Sabha, passed the Constitution Amendment Bill. This Act of Parliament takes away several of the Indian citizen's rights. The Act allows the Congress government, its police, army and official wing of *goondas*, the Youth Congress to do what they have been doing without question by the courts.

No longer will Indians be free to question in the courts the legality of laws which allow Indian citizens to be imprisoned without trial by the government. No longer will the trade unions be able to refer their disputes with managements and with the state to the courts. They will have to accept instead the rulings of tribunals which the governments at the centre and in the states will select. If the last year and a half of Indira Gandhi's rule are any indication, no longer will there be free elections in India without thousands of the leaders and cadres of the opposition parties being jailed.

Posing as a cure, this diseased and illegal law-making is an attack on the body of dissension, resentment and rebellion that is growing in the country. Within the Congress Party Indira faces the revolt of the state parties of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab who a few days before the passing of the Constitutional change, put forward an alternative plan to Indira's. They suggested, in cautious terms, that a parliament which has given itself the right to rule for seven years, instead of the five year term for which it was elected, would not have the confidence of the people if it changed the Constitution to keep power. They put forward the idea that this process of turning India into a one-party state should be done by a 'Constituent Assembly'. This tactful opposition within the Congress doesn't clearly say how this constituent assembly is to come about. As such, their feeble opposition is worthless, except for the fact that it is a sign of the discontent that is growing in the party.

Most of the discontent centres around the issue of Indira's son Sanjay who leads, without the benefit of

any votes from the people, the Congress Party's Youth Congress — an organisation with license to eliminate Indira's opponents, be they members of opposition parties or organisers within a community or factory.

The dissent in the country is wider. Across the nation it has focused on the issue of compulsory sterilisation. No stories of the riots that have accompanied forcible sterilisation in some communities in North India, have reached the censored Indian press. In October, in Muzaffarnagar, north of Delhi, a muslim community suffered 40 deaths at the hands of the police who were called in to quell a riot over the activities of the 'birth control' unit which had been sent to the town. In earlier months, there have been riots on a smaller scale in Delhi and Bombay over forcible sterilisation.

In Maharashtra and in the south, the labour unrest has centred on the question of bonus for industrial workers. In these states the strikes and the police action against them were given scant publicity. All over the country workers are defying the new emergency ruling which stops them demanding this 'bonus' which they have won over the years, (a sum of money which represents the eight to ten per cent payment of annual wages).

Under the pressure of labour unrest, the West Bengal Chief Minister has instructed employers to defy the government's bonus cut. In Kerala the Labour Minister has done the same. Even the Congress dominated mine-workers' union has been forced by miners to put in a ten per cent bonus claim. The steel workers have also brought their talks with their employers, the government, to a standstill on the bonus claim. Several industries, unable to resist the workers' demands, are now seeking 'formulae' by which the money can be paid. In the Life Insurance Corporation of India, a government financial concern with Lakhs of employees, the management has broken its bonus agreement and is now looking for a way to pay a partial bonus and avert the industrial trouble that the employees threaten.





# BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

## CARNIVAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

"The Notting Hill/West Indian Carnival Development Committee regrets and condemns the violence and brutality which marred Carnival '76, and all the joys and pleasure which it was planned, hoped and intended to bring to its many thousands of patrons and the community to which it belongs.

We find that it is incumbent upon us to state that the reason for this unfortunate happening lies squarely on the shoulders of the officers of Law and Order who contrary to the obligations of their office to preserve the peace took every provocative step in their power to do the opposite: Carnival '76 can be said to have been held virtually under arrest.

It is common knowledge that the Notting Hill Carnival has for the last ten years been a peaceful happy pleasure giving occasion. That it was suddenly burdened with the presence of upwards of 1,600 policemen was an insult. The explanation of this lies in the appointment of Chief Superintendent Patterson (as head of the local police) who as early as April of 1976 was a party to action which was intended to ban the Notting Hill Carnival from the streets, and who declared that the only alternative if it were to be kept on the streets would be to employ thousands of police to control it. . . ."

**Selwyn Baptiste, Chairman  
Carnival Development Committee.**

## NATIONAL PRESS

"From the start, the Notting Hill Carnival was different from previous years.

There was a tension in the streets and, for me the fury that followed was reminiscent of so many riots in American cities; riots supposedly started by a single criminal act, but in fact, generated by the bloated presence of a police force which, by waiting for trouble, cause trouble.

If this had been a Cockney Carnival in the East End would they have marched in with such severity? No. Are tourists, who every day have their pockets picked in the West End, protected by flying tacklers from Bow Street? No. Would they have sealed off Piccadilly and harassed people outside the Savoy? No.

But the Notting Hill Carnival, although a unique multi-racial affair, is a predominantly black festival; and, if Sir Robert Mark is honest he will say that this distinction alone is why he sent an army there, led by a superintendent with delu-

sions of General Patton.

Sir Robert who must take responsibility for what I witnessed as a calculated act of police overkill, has already skilfully used the media to rationalise his actions. (London *Evening News* yesterday: **Mark Warns — No Surrender To The Thugs**) instead of explaining why he ignored the elementary lesson given to him a week ago by black community leaders that a massive police force would provoke violence.

Having said that — and we need Sir Robert to explain — it would be wrong to dwell on the actions of the police, many of whom maintained their discipline in spite of their fear and in spite of the hopeless situation into which their superiors had led them. For the police were merely reflecting attitudes towards race which have become insidiously and dangerously fashionable in this country.

**John Pilger  
Daily Mirror 1.9.76.**

**Editorial  
Evening Standard 31.8.76.**

"It would be less than fair to aver that the police were in the right. All the reports suggest that Scotland Yard was too heavy handed on Monday. It should not have sent 1,500 uniformed men to police the Carnival in the Notting Hill area. A force seven times as large as the one that attended last year's festivities must surely have contributed to the tension in a part of London in which, as the Yard knows very well, the police are regarded by many inhabitants as the natural enemy. The whole exercise was an error of judgement."

**Joe Rogaly  
Society Today  
Financial Times 1.9.76.**

"Now, pickpockets have plagued London gatherings since time immemorial. You couldn't watch a decent hanging at Tyburn in the eighteenth century without the threat of having your purse cut from your arm, if not having your arm cut from your shoulder with it.

Muggings were rife throughout the nineteenth century fairs and festivals. It was a fortunate punter who returned from Epsom without some narrow escape. Even Battersea Fun Fair saw its share of thieves, pickpockets, baby-snatchers and youths prone to hitting ladies over heads with bricks.

We did not succeed in curing this sort of thing by cutting off people's heads or hands. We did not cure it by deporting them to Australia. We did not cure it by incarcerating them in Newgate. Nor, for that matter, have the young toughs of to-

day responded much to our progressive methods of correction or reform. Crowds tend to attract villains.

No reasonable person could doubt that pockets were again being picked in Notting Hill at the weekend — nor that black youths were doing it; nor that a certain amount of threatening was being done to assist it. But what earthly chance was there, at the height of an always emotional Carnival, that a full-blooded police charge into the tightly-packed streets of Notting Hill was going to stop it?"

**Simon Jenkins  
Evening Standard 31.8.76.**

"Odd, isn't it, how little we have heard from the Government over the Notting Hill riot? Yet the public is utterly shocked. It is the most calamitous event of the year in Britain. Even more so than the Thames flowing the wrong way. And we've heard a great deal about that.

Possibly the explanation is simply that Mr Roy Jenkins, the Home Secretary, is abroad laying the ground-bait for his illustrious new job as Common Market President.

But why is Big Jim silent on the subject?

Why, like Big Ben recently, has he failed to chime?

Could it be that no one among our rulers has the foggiest notion what to do?"

**Editorial  
Sunday Mirror 5.9.76.**

## THE BLACK PRESS

"While we condemn the actions of the police on Monday, we do not intend to spare those youngsters who are striving to dirty the name of the Carnival organisers.

Innocent people, especially those who came to Carnival to make a few pence by selling food and drinks were humiliatingly treated. Their food stuffs and drinks were used as missiles against the police.

Those youngsters' behaviour was in complete opposite to many of those who spent weeks of their time devoting their artistic talent in brightening up the Grove for the Carnival, and others who actively participated in providing the lovely steel-band music which filled the air.

Black community leaders who thought it their duty to intervene in quelling the riot were shown little respect for their efforts. They were sworn at and abused like children and their credibility as respected leaders of the black community will no doubt be questioned."

**Editorial  
West Indian World 3.9.76.**



# BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

The battle between young blacks and the police at the Notting Hill Carnival triggered off public comments from friends and enemies alike. Below, we reprint a cross-section of comments from the national press, the black press, politicians and the police.



Julian Stapleton

"It is true that there were pickpockets there, we cannot deny or support this behaviour, but should not the role of the police have been to warn people before and during the Carnival not to carry hand bags, wallets and purses openly and to only carry a minimum amount of money with them? It is wrong to view the attacks the police made on the Carnival crowds as being caused by these pickpockets. All the evidence available points to the fact that the police deliberately set out to disrupt Carnival and were even prepared for retaliation from the crowd, though they did not expect it to be as powerful as it was."

**Front Lines**  
**Organ of the Croydon & Brixton Collective.**

"But while the state, has a lot to answer for, so too have West Indian parents. The Asians have in contrast maintained a strong family discipline and motivated their children in the direction of material success.

But West Indian parents for the main part have lost control over their children who have fallen into the hands of nihilistic merchants of rhetoric who seem to believe that a lot of fancy words about revolution can bring about a Utopia."

**Robert Govender, Editor**  
**Caribbean Weekly Post 1.9.76**

"The Black Liberation Front totally and unconditionally support the actions of our young brothers and sisters. In the face of overwhelming intimidation from the police, they conducted themselves in

the spirit of their brothers and sisters in Soweto.

We blame Patterson, who was in charge of police operations at the Carnival. He has gone on record as being totally opposed to the Carnival being held, yet he was put in charge. This is a demonstration of the contempt with which the Metropolitan Police hold the black community, a fact which was reinforced by Robert Mark's public statements accusing 50% of the Blacks at the Carnival of being thugs and thieves. We do not deny that pickpocketing went on, but not more than happens at a football match, a street market or at any event at which crowds gather. The BLF sees this as a continuation of the campaign now waged for years to label all black youth as muggers, thieves and petty criminals.

If the police continue to oppress our people, we can be sure that Enoch Powell's prophesy of the River Tiber foaming with blood be fulfilled."

**Grass Roots**  
**Black: Liberation Front 31.8.76.**

## POLITICIANS

"In my view two practical innovations regularly used by American police forces should be introduced by the Home Office without delay.

First, police forces in this country should be issued with proper protective equipment for use in riot situations. The dustbin lids, orange crates, and cardboard boxes which the Notting Hill constables had to resort to are woefully inadequate when compared to the laminated plastic shields, the protective clothing, and the specially equipped vehicles which are part of the armoury of most overseas police forces, and indeed, of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Secondly, a common American police manoeuvre in tense racial situations is to put a comparatively thin blue line of officers in visible positions on the streets, while keeping massive reinforcements holed up out of sight in buildings and behind corners only a few yards away."

**Jonathan Aitken**  
**Tory MP for Thanet East.**

"My colleagues and I maintained a good working liaison with the local police. In Chief Superintendent Patterson they have a first-class officer who has learnt over backwards to establish a low profile in dealing with immigrants.

We discussed the Carnival with him beforehand and I am confident that he

acted rightly. He has my full support and sympathy in what has happened."

**Malby Crofton**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.**

"The fundamental questions are whether the area was over-policed and whether the police presence was too obtrusive.

An inquiry is needed and decisions have to be made for the future. Sir Robert is not the chief of police in a banana republic. I have a high regard for him, but he must watch that he does not appear to be pre-empting all the discussions that now have to take place."

**Mr Arthur Latham**  
**Labour MP for Paddington.**

## THE POLICE

"There are not going to be any 'no-go' areas in the Metropolitan Police area and there is no question of us abdicating our responsibility. The Metropolitan Police will police every street in its district and will uphold the law.

We are not going to buy illusory peace by watching decent black people being robbed by young black hooligans, even if it is to involve an element of risk going in to help them."

**Robert Mark**  
**Commissioner of Metropolitan Police.**

"Some people may have been puzzled or irritated by the presence of numbers of police, but these people were not those involved in the riot. What happened was bound to happen, unless police abdicated responsibility completely. Had there been fewer police on hand, the riot would have lasted longer, had there been more, not so long.

There were other influences at work, such as the enormous profits made by those issuing the "permits" (£50, £60, £80) allowing stall-holders to sell, the profits from illegal sales of drink, and the influence (though slight) of racially motivated black "politicians". Many people have a financial interest in the Carnival continuing.

The Carnival used to be an occasion of innocent entertainment. If it goes on next year it will be an occasion of hate and violence."

**Francis Wilkinson, Inspector**  
**Notting Hill Police Station.**



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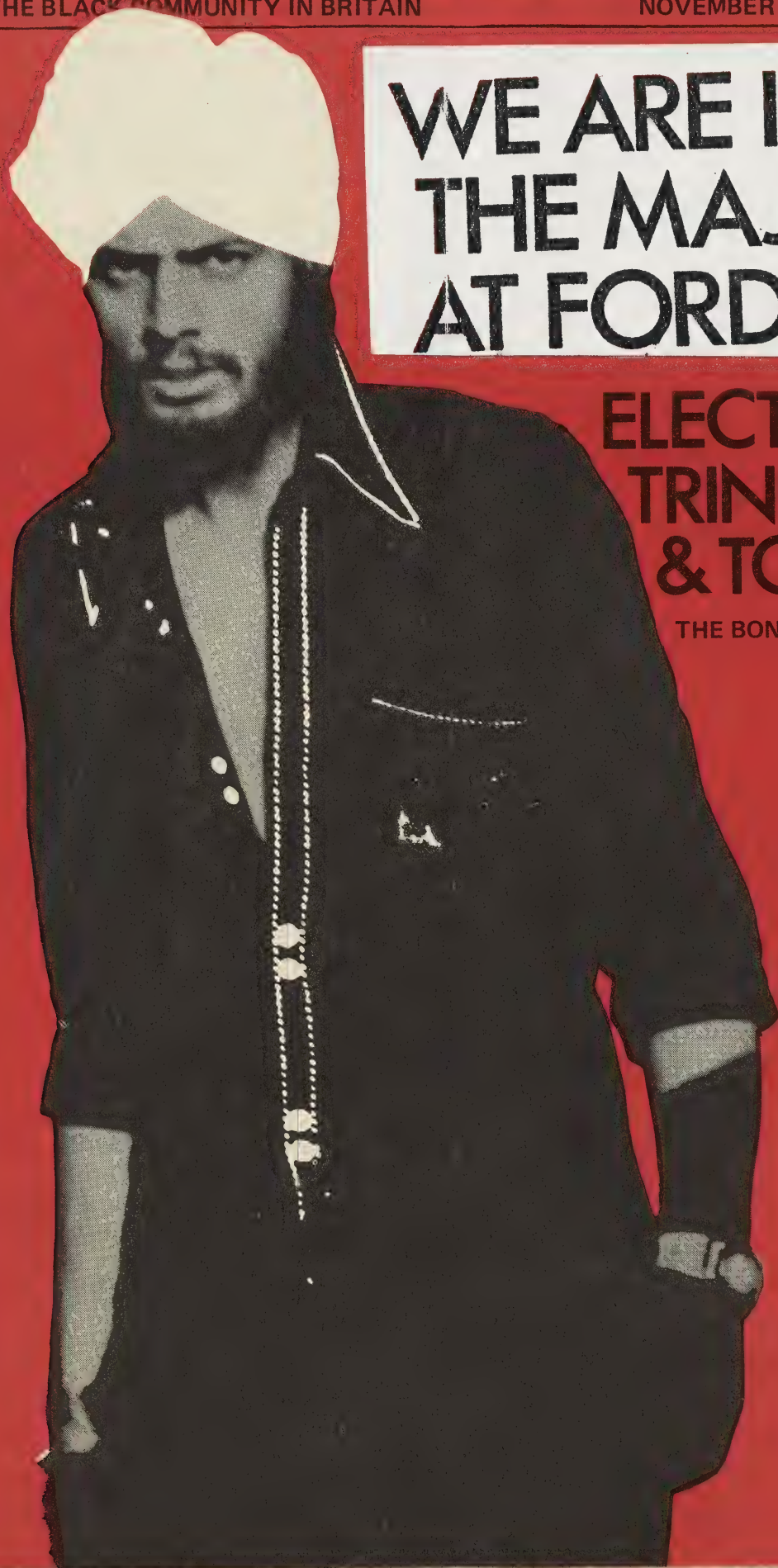
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# Race Today

VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

NOVEMBER 1976 25p



**WE ARE IN  
THE MAJORITY  
AT FORDS**

**ELECTIONS IN  
TRINIDAD  
& TOBAGO**

THE BONUS STRUGGLE IN INDIA



# LETTERS

## CARNIVAL '76

*Dear Race Today,*

We received the September 1976 issue and appreciated very much the coverage of carnival. This year was the first time we did not attend carnival when we were in the country and it was only because we were in Scotland at the time. Many of our friends went and told us of their experiences. Some with children did not go for fear there would be police trouble. We were concerned to think that large numbers of people may be put off going next year as a result of the police presence. However, your coverage is so spirited and positive about it being a rout of the police, that it restores optimism about next year. Most important, though, in our view is the idea that a popular committee be elected to organise carnival '77 and take measures to ensure that it is self-ordered and self-policed: then, even more people can enjoy it, without fear of police disruption.

Also Denzil Winsborrow's article on West Indian cricket fans was great and very funny. It seems as if he put down what many of us have been thinking.

We would like to express support for your good work and also let you know that beyond the politics in *Race Today*, it is highly readable.

Terisa Turner,  
Calvin Hernton,  
Ohio, USA.

## TAKING THE OATH

*Dear Race Today,*

On November 12, a Nigerian Moslem — Yahya Montecouri — stepped into the witness box in Leeds Crown Court, and prepared to take the oath. He was presented with a book wrapped in faded green cloth on which to swear, but before doing so, he asked if he could go beyond external appearances and look inside. He did, to discover a Bible! The usher looked rather embarrassed, but Yahya Montecouri magnanimously agreed to take his oath on this false Koran.

The incident seems to symbolise a great deal about British justice, and perhaps about the wider society as well. Although often scrupulously fair and tolerant on the surface, hidden beneath is a deep disregard and lack of respect for non-European people and their cultures.

Roger Ballard,  
Leeds.

## BLACK YOUTH AND MUGGING

*Dear Race Today,*

The newspapers are printing articles about black youths mugging old women. These articles encourage opinions to be formed that generally blacks are "bad" for the community. Whether we like it or not, we have to agree that there is some truth in such articles, exaggerated as they may be.

When a general is planning to attack, he must not only inspire confidence in his men, that they are worthy enough to win, but he must also look with a critical eye at the weaknesses of his own men.

Our black youths are obviously feeling the pressures of colour prejudice and are retaliating in the way they think most effective. I know of a more permanent way, and it is with peace, not violence. We have righteousness on our side, we always have had. In the days of slavery, an episode in the white man's past he seems not to remember, it was necessary to physically fight, and violence was often necessary.

Now, the form oppression takes has changed, so too must our methods of combating it.

The way I think we can fight is through the pages of your paper. It reaches coloured people in the streets, and with a determined and *united* effort we can begin to open up an entirely new understanding of what we are in the minds of white people.

Briefly, it is to stop completely the muggings that are committed by our own people as quickly as possible, and to eventually stop all crime committed by anyone with a coloured skin. We are all aware of the fact that white people too commit crimes, but I am just not concerned with them. We must look after our side of it. It is my dream to have Scotland Yard publish a report to say that, "Not one single crime was committed by a coloured person in Great Britain for the quarter ended. . . ." There would be no need to stand and argue forever in defence of coloureds over the causes and patterns of muggings or any other crimes.

How we actually achieve this will have to be examined in detail and is in no way impossible. We will never need to argue again in offices, shops, in the factories or in the schools over the issue of crimes committed by coloureds. We need only refer them to the 'report' which would speak for itself.

Everard E D'Silva,  
Haringey.

## CORRECTION

The feature article, **Black Parents On The Move**, (*Race Today*, October 1976) which stated the position of the Black Parents Movement, contained an erroneous statement. In the section, **Where We Stand**, we reported the following:

*"We see the country today as a country of nationalities — the English, the Scots, the Welsh, the Irish, the Greeks, the Blacks and the Asians, which would also include the Indians, the Pakistanis, the Bangladeshis."*

This should have read:

*"We see the country today as a country of nationalities — the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish and ethnic groups — the Greeks, the Blacks and the Asians, which would also include Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis."*



# EDITORIAL

## BUILDING THE INTERNATIONAL

The International Monetary Fund determines whether Jamaicans will eat or not; it determines whether service sector workers in Britain will be on the roll or on the dole in the coming months; it determines whether Indira Gandhi and Zia Ur Rahman, in India and Bangladesh will turn to dependence on the USSR for funding the faltering economies of their countries.

It tells Dennis Healey and the Labour government how much it can give in rate support grants to the local councils which rule the cities and ghettos of Britain, and so, the amount of money that can be spent on providing houses for workers and their families.

In the East End of London, it means that the Asian population, a third of the total in Spitalfields, can hope for state housing in 1984.

Throughout Britain, it means that the black population, 25 percent of whom work in the service sectors, will be hardest hit by the unemployment that the Labour government accepts.

The international capitalist state is a reality. Britain can't determine its domestic policy without the sanction of the international money lenders. Indira Gandhi can't determine policy in India without knowing what the USSR will hand out.

To defy the I.M.F. is to be faced with its military arm. In Jamaica we see the naked movements of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) supplying money and guns to the unemployed to destabilise Manley's regime. In India we have witnessed the imprisonment of thousands of workers. In Trinidad in 1970, the USS Guadalcanal hovered along the shoreline, strengthening the tottering regime of Dr Eric Williams, threatened by an alliance of Asians and Africans, unions and the unemployed.

In *Race Today*, we have spoken as a section of the international army of labour, the Caribbeans, Indians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Africans who have come to Britain to support, through work and taxation, the lean sectors of the British workforce. We have our own reasons. We are not simply manipulated on this historical chessboard. We work to send money home, because our labour in the sweat shops of the East End supports a family in Bangladesh, because the eight hour shift in Dagenham or on London Transport is necessary to support our families and relatives in Barbados and Jamaica.

As black workers in Britain, we are, by definition, part of an international working class. By interdependence and instinct, we are both part of the working class of the metropolis and the exported muscle of the Caribbean, South Asia and Africa. That is not to pose a separation of body and soul — not to say that our muscle is here and our hearts are there. No. It is

to say that the money we send from here is determined by the needs out there.

More basic than that: the amount of overtime that an Asian or West Indian puts in on the assembly line, is directly related to how much money he sends to Bangladesh, Gujerat or the Caribbean.

More real than that: to strike or not to strike will be partially determined by the letter which says things are hard in Sylhet, that prices have shot up in Trenchtown, that the bonus is not being paid in Bombay.

That is the interdependence which determines the terrain of political struggle for us in *Race Today*. That's the reason we cover the mass struggles for the bonus in India; the reason why we analyse the balance of forces in Trinidad; and the connection between these mass struggles and those of the tenants of Varden Street.

It is the terrain in which we are dedicated to tracing, supporting and posing the organisational task of breaking the stranglehold that the I.M.F. and the like have over us.

Black workers in Britain are the agency through which the British working class is linked to millions of workers and peasants in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Caribbean and workers from these areas who are based in Canada and the United States.

Today, we are faced with the task of adding organisational bite to this historical linkage.

Race Today Collective Association November 1976

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# THE GUILTY VERDICTS ARE UNACCEPTABLE

Six young black women from Harlesden were arrested and viciously beaten up on the night of June 24, 1976, following a battle between the police and black youth making their way home from the Burning Spear Club. The police instigated the confrontation when they attempted to force a 15 year old youth into a police car.

Yet, in evidence to the court, the police denied the incident involving the 15 year old youth. They claimed, instead, that they came into contact with the defendants when they saw the girls knocking on doors in the early hours of the morning.

More than 200 members of Harlesden's black community demonstrated the following day against the brutality of the police and mounted a picket on Harlesden Police Station. They have also been packing out the public gallery of Willesden Magistrates court while the case has been fought out.

Last month, we reported in some detail on the progress of the case and how the organisation around the case was proceeding.

Below, we print extracts from the closing speech of Ian McDonald, one of the defence barristers and the verdicts handed down by the magistrates.

Hyacinth	— Using Threatening Behaviour	— Guilty
	Wilfully Knocking on Doors	— Dismissed
	Assault on a Police Officer	— Guilty
Virginia	— Using Threatening Behaviour	— Dismissed
	Wilfully Knocking on Doors	— Dismissed
Rosa	— Assault on a Police Officer	— Guilty
Monica	— Assault on a Police Officer	— Not Guilty
	Assault on a Police Officer	— Guilty
Shirley	— Obstructing a Police Officer	— Guilty
Olive	— Wilfully Knocking on Doors	— Dismissed
	Assault on a Police Officer	— Guilty

We were told by the prosecutor, in his opening speech, that we must all keep a low profile. Mr King-Lassman called for calm. He said that this was a storm in a tea-cup. I objected at the time. No prosecutor has a right to say that. It is not his function. It is not the function of the court to act as some kind of fire brigade on the racial situation in Brent because, let's make no mistake, that's what he is talking about. The function of the court is to see whether it can get at the truth. It has to look at the events as real live people describe them. One side says one thing happened, the other side says something else happened. Your function is to say whether the prosecution's version of what took place carries conviction or not.

As defence counsel, if I am told that events took place in a certain way, and it is obvious that what my clients say is in total contradiction to what the police are going to say, then I have to be prepared for a confrontation. The day that any defence advocate starts censoring the case of his clients for the kind of politi-

cal interest that Mr King-Lassman is suggesting, then the candle of liberty begins to be snuffed out. I, for one, will have no part of that.

## POLICE OFFICERS DO LIE

I want to put to rest the suggestion made by the prosecutor in re-examination of a number of police officers, that no police constable would jeopardise his career and his pension by acting in this way or, by coming to court and telling a pack of lies. This is an old argument. The truth is, that the normal thing when police get into court and give their evidence — especially in Magistrates Courts — is that they are 98% sure they will be believed. That is a statistical fact. A few years ago, during an Anti-Apartheid demonstration against a South African rugby tour, a young man was arrested and convicted of threatening behaviour and assault on a police officer. The evidence of the police officer was believed. It was only some years later, when that police officer found religion, that the truth came out.

You, as a Bench, probably get to know the many different police officers who come regularly to this court. Also, you have a lot in common because you are both concerned with law and order and the stamping out of crime. It's very difficult in that situation to be suddenly told that that person is a liar. I understand that. It's also a well-known fact in the legal profession that, if we confront police evidence — as in this case — then we run very high risks. If we attack too hard we're told that our client will get a bigger sentence. So, we soft-pedal. We even advise our



clients to plead guilty because they'll get a lighter sentence.

Given all the assumptions about the police, given the reality of legal representation, the police have enormous scope for abusing their power.

### POLICE ASSAULT DEFENDANTS

No-one can persuade me that Rosa T. got her injuries colliding with PC Taylor. She might have caught her eye on one of his shiny buttons, but I've never heard of a swollen eye being caused by a button. And this

leaves unexplained her swollen lips, and the bruising on her chest and back. What is beyond dispute are the doctor's findings. You have to ask, did she get these injuries because she collided with PC Taylor or, did she get them because she was kicked and punched? The injuries to Hyacinth M. are even more mysterious if you accept the evidence of PC Fraser. Her injuries are beyond dispute — tender right jaw, tender left cheek-bone and bruising on lower abdomen and tender on her back. PC Fraser says he saw no injuries on her and is adamant that he did not touch or punch her. If you believe him, then how did Hyacinth M. get her injuries?





# BONFIRE NIGHT IN CHAPELTOWN, LEEDS: BACK ON THE STREETS IN '77

In the December 1975 issue we reported the struggle waged by young blacks to win the right to have their bonfire night celebrations on the streets of Chapeltown, Leeds without interference from the police.

One year later we return to Chapeltown, Leeds to report further on the struggle as it has developed.

On the night of November 5, young people throughout Britain celebrate bonfire night in commemoration of Guy Fawkes' attempt to explode gunpowder in the Houses of Parliament. It is the night on which the streets are taken over by the youth who build bonfires and explode firecrackers. This tradition is particularly strong in Yorkshire and young blacks in Chapeltown, Leeds have been active participants.

For four consecutive years, going back to 1972, black youth have fought the West Yorkshire police for control of the streets of Chapeltown on bonfire night.

Last year, 1975, we witnessed the explosion at its fiercest. A few weeks before, activists in the race relations industry in Leeds negotiated with senior police officers that the police would keep out of the area. The police broke the agreement and entered the area around the popular Rossington Grove bonfire, in force. Young blacks took up the challenge and, in the following two hours, 300 youths fought the police through the maze of streets and back alleys in the community. There was but one arrest on that night.

In the days which followed, raids were carried out on several homes in the area. Students were lifted from local schools and questioned. The police battered a string of confessions from several of the 12 defendants and eventually returned charges of affray against nine of them.

Parents and young blacks threw themselves into a campaign in support of the defendants under the leadership of the defence committee. Seven defendants were acquitted on the affray charges.

As bonfire night 1976 approached, the issue was posed once more. Who would control the streets of Chapeltown on bonfire night?

Activists in the race relations industry met with senior police officers to discuss the situation. The meeting could not avoid the one fact, that young blacks were prepared to mount a resistance should there be any undue interference from the police officers. The police held to their position — they would tolerate no large bonfires on the streets. The popular bonfire at Rossington Grove, around which hundreds of young blacks gathered, would not be allowed.

The Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police, Ronald Gregory, thought the situation important enough to call a press conference. He confirmed the police opposition to the Rossington Grove bonfire.

*"Police patrols, foot patrols and car patrols will be maintained in the Chapeltown area. There is*

*no suggestion that the police will be withdrawn, but the men will be briefed to assist if possible the celebration of November 5, certainly not to interfere unless absolutely necessary. If they have small bonfires in the street we will not do anything about it. Only when they build much bigger fires adjacent to property and it is only when gangs start roaming around and causing annoyance to everyone — that is, damaging property and throwing fireworks — that the police are bound to react."*

As it turned out, both the police and the race relations activists had the same objective — to keep young blacks off the streets. Success in this objective would mean, above all else, a crushing defeat of the struggle waged by young blacks over the years, for the right to have their bonfires on the streets — particularly the one at Rossington Grove.

The police had vast reserves of force at their disposal with which to win their objective. Not so the race relations activists. Their success depended on manipulation and the exploitation of the caution which members of the community had developed in four years of relentless struggle.

With their base in the local community centre, the race relations activists took the decision to imprison the bonfire. With the assistance of £500 from the local Community Relations Council, they announced a gala affair at the community centre. They would build a bonfire in the backyard. No letting off of firecrackers and bangers on the streets. Oh no! They hired a professional organisation to promote a colourful fireworks display. A steelband and sound system would provide added attraction; and should the youth develop a hunger or a thirst during the evening, free food and drinks were at hand. All financed by the local Community Relations Council.

No group or organisation emerged from the community to propose the alternative.

Yes, there were parents who were prepared to stand up with the youth for the right to have their bonfire on the streets. We spoke to some of these.

Yes, there were youth who were prepared to organise a bonfire in Rossington Grove. We spoke to some of them too. They went as far as taking logs of wood and other debris to Rossington Grove in preparation for the bonfire. But a well coordinated move by police and local health officials saw to it that the piles of wood and debris were moved in daily operations of scavenging.

And the mood of defeat spread even to the militant



*Chapeltown News*. In a letter to the Chief Constable, entreating him to keep the police out, the *News* accepted as a fact of life that the imprisoned bonfire would be the major focus of the celebrations.

On the night of November 5, young blacks made their way to the community centre. What else could they do? There was no leadership, none at all, to which they could turn and around which the bonfire

on the streets could be organised. An odd firecracker here, a banger there represented a token resistance.

And slowly, as the evening wore on, the realisation of a crushing defeat dawned on some. Out of this defeat only one road lies ahead, the mobilisation of the youth and the parents around the slogan, 'Back to the Streets in 1977'.

## NO MISCHIEF ON MISCHIEF NIGHT

November 4 is Mischief night. The tradition is that the youth take to the streets and are free to commit acts of mischief. Here again the local race relations activists were determined to keep young blacks off the streets. To this end they organised a Kung Fu film at the Primrose Hill youth club. A group of teachers and social workers were on hand to escort the youth home. When we asked the organiser whether the teachers and social workers were there to patrol the police, the organiser replied, "of course not, they were there to prevent the kids from making trouble".

Below, Sister Vie describes the scene on Mischief night.

Light entertainment in the form of Kung Fu drew 300 youths to the Primrose Hill weekly youth club.

By 9.45 pm. Thursday, November 4, when the film show ended, the youth took to their heels to check de road fe go home. On Bayswater Road, the crowd was in high spirits with the high kicking action of the Kung Fu stars still reeling in their heads; some were throwing bangers, making others. . . .

As the crowd neared Roundhay Road they met up with a convoy of adults, including teachers from the school, CRC officials and so-called black leaders from Chapeltown community, acting as escorts for the youth on this particular night.

On Roundhay Road the crowd stopped to check the 'Gaiety' scene. Some entered the pub, but the bulk continued along Gathorne Terrace, only to meet up with Babylon patrols. From the top to the bottom of the road Babylon lined up in two's and three's. Half way down the road the crowd split into two; the lesser numbers made their way into Chapeltown via

Louis Street, while the large numbers continued along Gathorne Terrace. A few stopped at the Asian shop, and then entered Rossington Grove.

And who should we meet again, more Babylon. Dem stan up right on the spot where the bonfire was last year. Seven Babylon and an inspector stood at the junction where Grange Avenue meets Spencer Place. Forty yards down either end of Spencer Place more Babylon could be seen.

Babylon look cold, the youths dem stay cool, but it was far too obvious that tonight, Mischief night, of all the 364 days they had too much protection. Clearly the police must have been briefed before hand about the film show and the route the youth would take into Chapeltown.

By midnight, not one single incident had taken place. The volunteers, working on the all night emergency phone line, stayed awake until the small hours of the next morning. But who knows what de early morning blues will bring.

Chapeltown News  
Number 37 August 1976  
Special Issue  
Regular readers will note that this issue is different from others. Instead of the usual mixture of stories, this issue is much shorter and is devoted to one topic. We hope to be back to normal in October - so long as we can raise enough money to keep going. PLEASE RUSH YOUR DONATIONS TO:  
5p Chapeltown News Collective, c/o Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7

### VERDICTS A VICTORY



Left to right: Danny Cohen (not guilty of all charges), Mrs Gertrude Paul (defence committee), Glenville...

The Bonfire Night Trial finally ended on 11th July. It will go down as a turning point in the history of Chapeltown - a great victory for the Black youth, and indirectly as a victory for all of us who are struggling for equality and unity between blacks and whites. Because an all white jury found the defendant NOT GUILTY of almost all their charges.

Issue No 31 February 1976  
Chapeltown News  
5p c/o Chapeltown Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7

## THE COMMUNITY ON TRIAL





Of the 23,000 workers at the Ford's Dagenham estate 60% are black — West Indian and Asian. In the Body Plant we are 70% of the labour force of 6,000 workers. And in the Paint, Trim and Assembly Plant (P.T.A.) we are 60% of a labour force of 5,000 workers.

The car industry, for the capitalists, is a major source of wealth and power in the international economy. It is equally so for the British section and Fords is King in Britain.

The production of cars at Ford's Dagenham estate brings wealth and power to some 40 other industries whose products are essential to the production of the motor car.

It is not only the capitalist who derives power from the car industry. At Dagenham, the sole power is not Henry Ford. To be in the majority at such a crucial point in the national economy is not only to have power against the Ford management, but also to be powerful in relation to those who govern us.

Ford's Dagenham has now to be added to the various points of power we have accumulated in Britain, from which we launch the struggle to win what we need here in Babylon.

And the black workers at Ford's Dagenham estate are at the centre of the rebellion taking place here.

We introduced ourselves to the nation on the night shift of Tuesday, September 28, 1976. The night shift clocked in at 9.45 pm. This is the Body Plant. 4,000 black workers have left their homes in the black community for the wage the eight hour shift would bring them. For the next eight hours the workers would press and assemble the body of the motor car — doors, roofs, wing and floor panels.

By 11.30 pm the rumour is in circulation that there is a dispute among the

door-setters. There are 12 door-setters on the night shift (Bshift). The management has tried to introduce new equipment on this section, even though it was agreed years ago that no new techniques are introduced on the night shift.

In short, the door-setters are asked to do more work for the same money. They refuse it.

The management resurrects the old weapon. They must divide the door-setters from the rest of the workers in the Body Plant. It is layoff time. The entire plant is ordered home. They will only be paid for the hours they have worked. It is past midnight now and transportation from the company estate to the black community is at a minimum. It is naked punishment — all night in the plant and no wages to show for it.

The shop stewards, elected shop floor representatives of the Transport and General Workers Union, call a meeting. Not much is resolved here. Attempts are made to close the gates and have a sit-in organised. And then it all exploded. Cups from the canteen are thrown at management officials. They flee. Fires are lit and two post office vans are overturned. The directors' dining room is smashed to smithereens. Police and firemen arrive and the men refuse to let them in. Hoses are turned on the police. The windows of the administrative block are broken and equipment destroyed. At the end of it all management gives an estimate — £20,000 worth of damage.

(The following is a diary of subsequent events.)

**Wednesday, September 29**

Day shift refuses to come out in support of night shift workers. The night shift has a meeting and rejects management proposals. (See page 224) A strike

is on.

**Tuesday, October 12**

Back to work.

**Thursday, October 14**

Four car workers are sacked for their involvement in the riot. 72 men stop work. **Friday, October 15**

72 men return and a strike call is rejected. Another man is sacked and five are suspended without pay for five days. This brings the total of dismissals to five and suspensions to seven. Eight door-hangers come out in support.

**Monday, October 18**

Seven door-hangers who come out in support are sacked as fears of further layoffs increase.

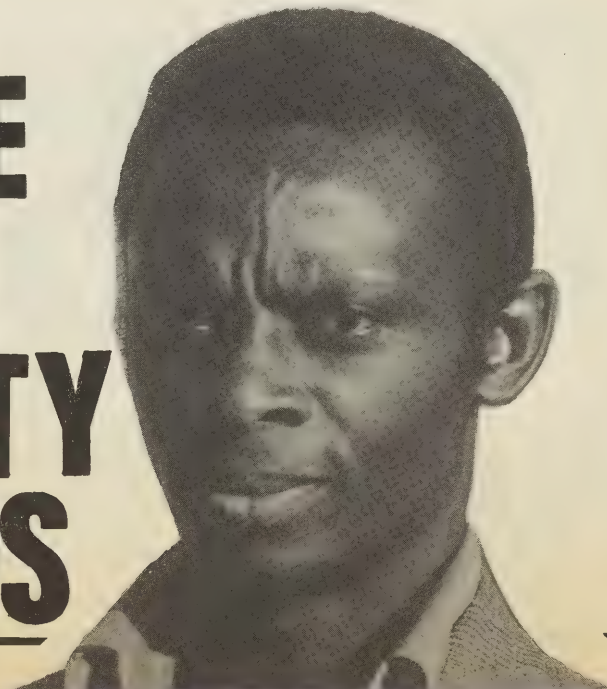
**Monday, November 17**

A report appears that Paul Thornborough, a 'scab' who did one of the door-hanging jobs, is expelled from the TGWU. In effect this means that he cannot work at Fords.

"Since January 1973, the men in the PTA have been laid off 35 times! Very large numbers of workers have left Fords, in disgust at the loss of earnings due to frequent layoffs — but among those who remain, the anger is building up. At the moment there is an official strike call in the PTA Plant to get a new layoff agreement. The demand has come up in the factory for 40 hours pay, work or no work. The demand has come directly from workers." **PTA Convenor**

The fight against layoffs is an old one, going back 20 years. There is a dispute between management and a section of workers in the plant and all the workers are sent home without pay. The workers have, through their representatives, demanded a guaranteed wage, work or no work. It is this struggle that the black workers have taken up.

# WE ARE IN THE MAJORITY AT FORDS





# EIGHT HOURS PAY, WORK OR NO WORK

**On the night after the riots trade union leaders called a mass meeting of workers to decide on what further action should be taken. Below we report the details of that meeting.**

The night shift (B-Shift) had a meeting tonight, in the canteen. The atmosphere was pretty good, a lot of cheering, joking etc. The gates were surrounded by cameramen, and it was clear that the company had deliberately left all the debris and rubbish lying around all through the day, so that the press could see it, and the incoming night shift workers could get disgusted at the havoc wreaked by the 350 who had stayed the night and rioted.

The main problem at issue is the problem of layoffs, and what can be won. But as one worker said: "We've been fighting for layoff pay for 20 years, and we've never got anywhere." There will clearly be a struggle, and the meeting tonight was to decide what form that struggle should take.

There were at least 700 — 800 people there, white, black and Asian. Just before the meeting started, a column of men marched into the hall with placards etc. saying things like 'No layoffs', and making quite a stir. Mostly Asians and West Indians. . . generally well received.

The meeting started, and Dan Connor presented the following case: the union officials in the plant had decided that they would not hold discussions with plant management. They went straight over to top management at Warley, where they met Vice-President Hayes and Terry Beckett. The union put the position that they wanted eight hours pay for the men laid off on Tuesday night: and they also wanted guarantees of eight hours pay, work or no work.

Ford replied that they were only prepared to pay four hours (which included the two already paid) for the Tuesday layoff. Also, they said that they were intending to discipline some workers, and this might lead to sackings. They also

said that they would never again introduce new techniques on the night shift (something which was supposed to have been agreed years ago!), and that they would not lay anyone off after 11.00pm, you get paid for the whole night (as long as you are not involved in the strike yourself).

At the point where it was said that Ford wanted to discipline the rioters, a great roar went up, and people were shouting 'No way', and 'Bollocks' etc. Connor made it clear that the trade union side had refused to accept any disciplining of workers, and that although they did not agree with all that had happened in the riot, they could "fully understand" the "reasons why the lads reacted in that way".

The company had also asked that the unions should join with them in making a joint public statement deploring the events that had taken place. The union side refused to do this.

Connor then went on to say that "You have two options. You either accept the company's offer, on the understanding that if they ever lay us off at that time of night (after 11), we will do the same thing again. . . or you decide to strike".

Connor played the meeting accurately, without really committing himself either way. . . although with a little encouragement, he did say that in his personal opinion the company's offer was not good enough.

There was then about 15 minutes of discussion from the floor, not all of which we could hear. Various people put cases. Some people wanted to see pickets put on the gates of the Body Plant and then put on gates of other plants on the Estate. . . Somebody asked Connors who he was and why he was there, and he replied, "I have been leading the struggle against layoffs in this plant for 10 years, and the last time we had a riot I was at the head of it. . ." Connor also stressed, "What we are talking about is not eight hours work, but that we should be paid for a full shift when we come in. Eight

hours pay whether there's work or not.

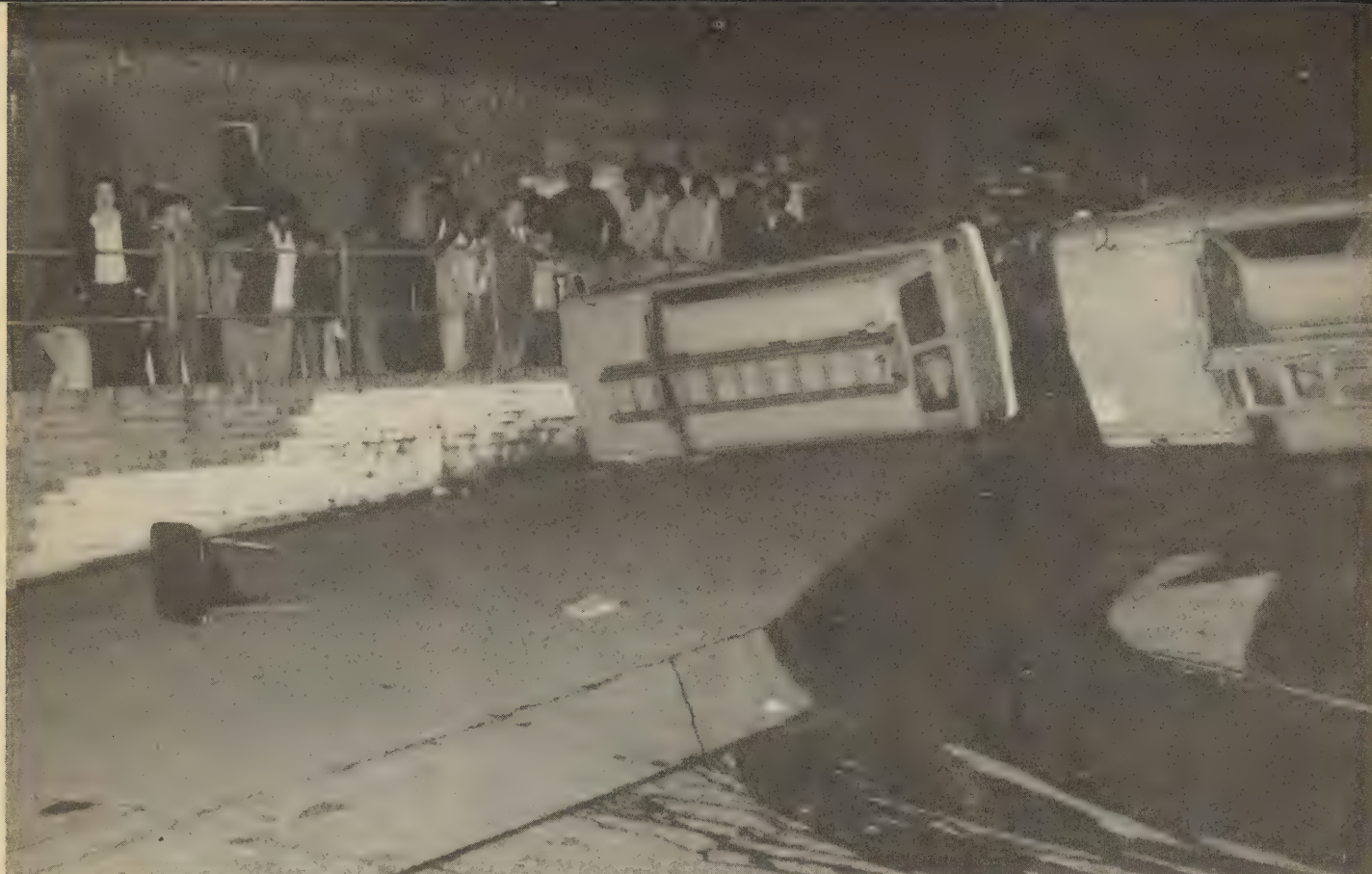
At various points there were clenched fist salutes from black workers. At one point there was a potentially racial incident when a black worker was asking something, and somebody over the other side of the canteen shouted out "Shut up you black bastard", or something like this. A lot of black blokes started getting up onto chairs, looking in that direction to see what was going on. Could have been nasty.

The discussion about the forms of action that should be taken showed that Connor had learned the lesson from the '75 Occupation. First he said that any strike committee would be made up of shop stewards, the convenor, and workers from the floor (the result of pressures in '75). He also said that everyone would have to be very clear about it. If they were proposing to take action with the picketing, then they would have to make a firm commitment. In short, he called for a show of hands of those people who would undertake a 24 hour picket which would have to go on for the whole of the week. On the other hand, he said, a strike committee could be formed and this would take care of it all.

However, when he asked for a show of hands of people who would be prepared to do picket duty, he got less than 50. Then, when he asked for a vote of those who wanted to see a strike committee set up, he got again a show of little more than 50. The meaning of this is important. In my mind, there was a definite desire to do something, to spit in the eye of Ford, to make a protest. But the workers in that hall were not prepared to get involved in what should be done. To my mind, the prospect of occupying the plant (picketing in the pissing rain) was not attractive, and at the same time people didn't see much point in deciding about whether there should be a strike committee. . . And in fact it seemed that only about half the meeting was aware that by rejecting the company's offer, they had put themselves into dispute, and were on strike. In fact Connor had to stress and explain that fact a couple of times.

So, in the event, what we have is a decision to form a strike committee, which would undertake to meet the shop stewards off A-Shift tomorrow morning in an attempt to get them out on strike. It seems from the feeling on A-Shift today that it would be a hard job to get an all-out strike. . . but 5510 (Doorhangers) will probably be prepared to strike, which would result in the rest of the plant being laid off anyway. They will meet again at the same time in the canteen, next Wednesday. At this point there were great cheers, and Connor stressed that the single unifying slogan of this strike was **Eight Hours Pay Whether Working Or Not.**





## IT HAPPENED BEFORE! DAGENHAM 1973

**March in the Body Plant, Night Shift . August 30, 1973.**

On Thursday night, the Body Plant was working normally. At ten minutes to midnight the management came round and said that the Upstairs Body was laid off, and they could "all go home". Some people accepted, and went home. But Ford's action was clearly provocative, and since many workers had no chance of getting home at that time of night, they decided to show the Company what they thought of it.

About 300 men marched up to the Supervisor's office. They blocked the door so that management couldn't get out. The stewards went in, but didn't win any guarantees of a full night's pay. So there was a lock-in. In the words of one man .

"We had murders up there. You could hear the shouting from the street outside. People were trying to kick the doors in, and a lot of windows got smashed."

Fire extinguishers were set off and fire alarms rang. There was broken glass everywhere. The police were called in, and after the management had been locked in for a full hour, they agreed that the men would be guaranteed a full night's pay.

"We ended up doing nothing all night. Just sitting around, sleeping, playing cards and messing about. . . And getting paid for it!"

**"Riots and Pickets": Body Plant and PTA: Day Shift: September 19, 1973.**

Three weeks later, Ford again tried mass layoffs. On Friday September 14 a West Indian welder from the Body Plant was sacked for allegedly hitting a foreman with an iron chairleg. The next Tuesday, his whole section (140 men) struck in his support, and Ford told the next day's Day Shift that they were laid off until further notice. The events that followed were described in the *Dagenham Advertiser* :

"A strike over a sacked worker erupted into violence as thousands of Ford workers ran riot through the Dagenham factory. Production of Cortinas and Granadas was halted as workers swarmed over electrical equipment. A huge procession of men, estimated to be 2,000 strong, marched to the management offices to demand work, and the police were rushed into the factory. Employees from the Body Plant and PTA started a 'work-in'. When it became clear that production was stopped, they started wrecking vehicles and shouting anti-management slogans. Workers declared that they would occupy the paint plant until the night shift, which was working normally, arrived."

During this period of layoff struggles extra police were on permanent stand-by at the local police station, in case of an 'uprising' at the factory.



# WHAT THE WORKERS SAY

## A WEST INDIAN WORKER

### WORKING AT FORDS

"The majority of blokes, for the first hour [at Fords], say they have had enough, because they have to work harder than they have before. I believe you got to give something a chance, a week or a fortnight, to see how it is working. It's just like when I first start at Fords. The first day I call it a day. Well the same day a few white guys and coloured guys try and encourage me on and I stick it. I stick it for a week, stick it for two weeks and I end up there for six years.

The job is tedious for a start. Some men, they get inside there to work but as you walk through Fords you will see a lot of men idling. I do not think the management can run the factory. I do not think the management in Fords has got any idea. I was told by a foreman that it runs like that through most big companies.

### LAYOFFS

It's Tuesday night. The men goes into work. The night shift goes in, everyone starts to work. I was working on the Estate side frames just putting the side frames in the car. At about 11.30 the rumour went around the factory that management said they would lay everyone off. The stewards called a meeting to decide what action the men were to take. They tried to get the feeling of the men. The men are fed up with being sent home often and some decide to stay in the plant. Some try to close down different departments. The stewards start telling the men they can't go where they want to go. The body plant men want to go over to the PTA to explain to the men there what problems we have over in the body shop, to try to stop the whole production. The stewards advise us that we cannot go over to the PTA. They say that is breaking company rules, regulations.

### VIOLENCE AT FORDS

Violence is always at Fords. Well, I was offered a job as a foreman, I would not take it because the majority of the black guys looks upon me as a black guy and I cannot tell him what to do. Well most black people at Fords do not want to be

told anything by a bloke who has got a bit of authority. There is a lot of violence against foremen because the foreman just tries to do his job. The West Indians will threaten him. They are quite a few foremen who were cuffed down while doing their job.

### AFTER THE RIOT

After the riot I was in the foreman's office and the management called the foreman and asks him to write out the names of the troublemakers and come to the office with the names during the day. I think they chose those names because quite a few of them are new blokes. was told there's one special foreman who comes from Rhodesia. He picked out ten men. They say that this foreman picked out blokes whom he clashed with before. At the moment there's a guy out sacked who was always in trouble with this guy. I never get involved with him. I never worked with him. As long as they don't trouble me I don't trouble them. But certain guys claim that he does not like black people.

The feeling is, at the moment, that it's Christmas and the majority of the men are going to do what the management asks them to do. The men need the money. But there will come another time, after Christmas, if management tries such a thing again there would be the same violence again."

## A BANGLA DESHI WORKER

### NEW TO FORDS

"I've worked at the Dagenham plant for just five weeks now. I work on what they call the 'roundabout'. I do spotting and welding. Before getting a job at Fords I was a factory worker for a few years. I used to do machine-work. I've been in Britain 12 years, it's the first time I've worked in a car firm. I got the job through the employment office. Where I work in Fords, it's a huge factory, there are about 50% black workers.

Working at Fords is not bad, it's better than other factories because a lot of the workers understand all sorts of things. The foremen aren't rude to you like they are in other places. In my section the fore-

men are all white. They work very hard themselves, much harder than any of the workers and they try and get us to work like them. Sometimes, if they want to avoid any hold up, they even do a bit of work for the worker. People say that we don't work in Fords, but I can tell you we do a lot of work. We get one hour off for lunch and another 15 minutes break and and the foremen start up the line so you can't take more than 15 minutes off. Now the work is increasing. Even the 40% rise we're asking for doesn't cover the cost of things I and my family need. I pay £5 in fares to the factory every day. All prices keep going up. So the money's not very good.

### AGAINST THE PAY FREEZE

What we are asking for now is the 13 point facility. This means a 40% increase in pay. The workers have told the union to ask for that. The company offered us 5%. We rejected it. The other disputes in the section next to mine were about an old worker who was not getting his pension. It's about all workers getting proper pension. Then there's a lot of dissatisfaction about canteen prices, we want them brought down. Then the line workers want an allowance because they work hardest.

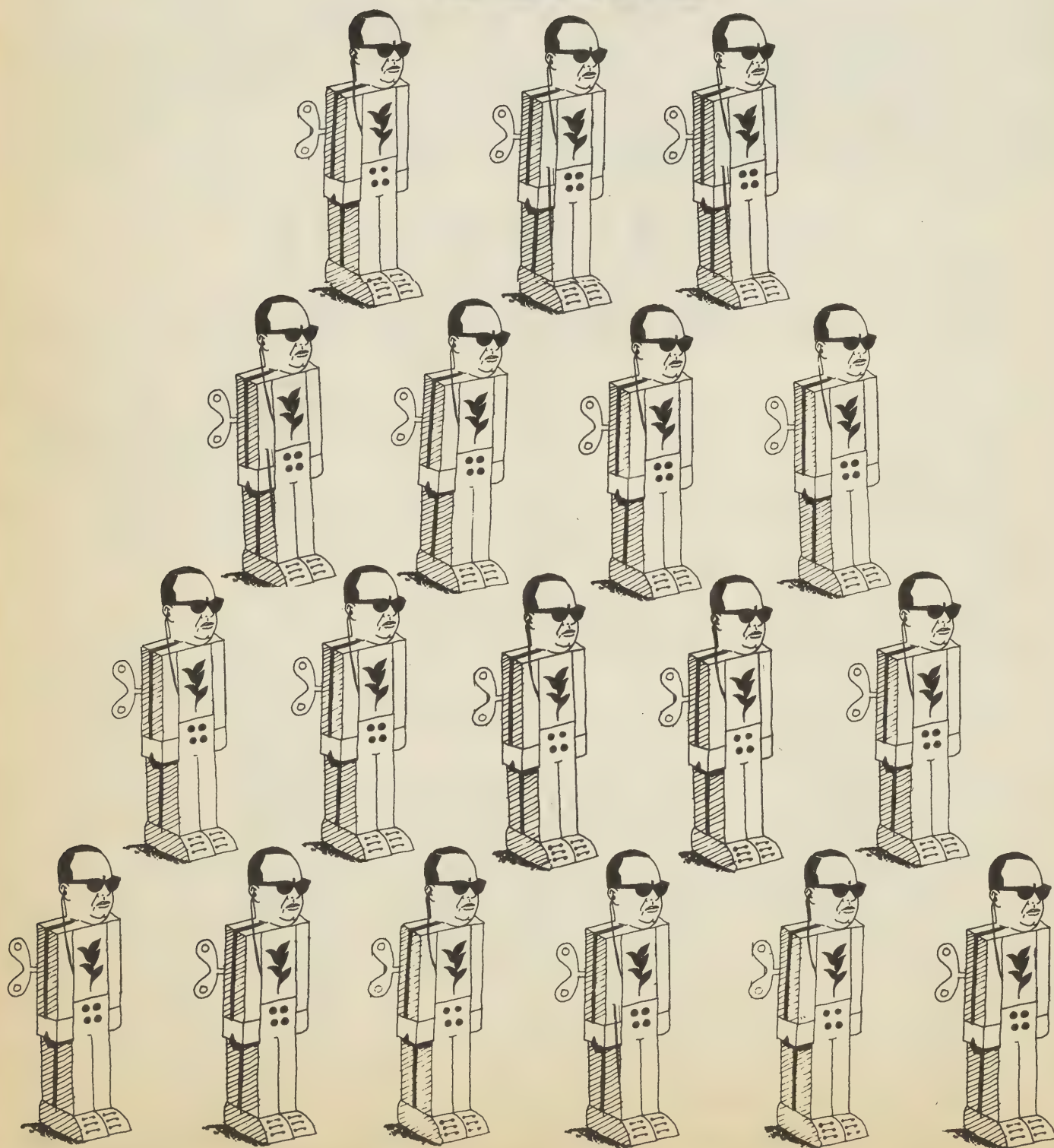
### LAYOFFS

Even in the last five weeks, I've been laid off a couple of times. We were laid off because some night shift people walked off their section and the whole shift went on strike. Then the door setters at the other end of the line went on strike. That stopped the whole line. There was no work going on. Then we were laid off. You always get a letter telling you you are laid off. This layoff was on Monday, October 11, at about 1.30 in the afternoon. When this happened, since I was new, I asked a white man who works with me what it means and he said that when we get laid off we'll get 80% of our wages. Then there were meetings and lots of discussion. Some people said the layoffs are not the company's fault, because there's plenty of work and they want to give it out, but the workers don't want to listen to the way the company makes us work."



*Race Today* was on hand to follow the final week of the election campaign in Trinidad and Tobago. Below, we publish our report. In the Backlash section, we reproduce several responses to the elections from different areas of the society.

# ELECTIONS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO





We arrive at Trinidad's Piarco airport on September 6. Through customs and immigration and then off to the capital city, Port of Spain.

Elections are a week away, September 13, and we follow the final week of the campaign from our base in East Dry River, a working class suburb of the capital city.

The election is taking place against the background of six years of working class revolt. Between February and April 1970, street demonstrations and strikes, accompanied by widespread looting and burning, pushed the soldiers in the nation's army to the point of open revolt against the government. American warships, with armed marines aboard, cruised menacingly off shore, ready to invade the islands for the sole purpose of keeping the Peoples National Movement (PNM) in power.

In the following six years, the government has been forced to resort to four states of emergency; suspending democratic rights, arresting and detaining working class leaders and political activists without trial, as the revolt spread to almost every section of the population.

Elections were held in 1971. Opposition parties boycotted the elections and conducted a successful no-vote campaign. The field was left open to the Peoples National Movement which won all 36 seats from votes cast by 28% of the electorate.

Elections 1976, and eight political parties are challenging the ruling PNM for the right to run the nation's affairs. Apart from a population of one million and a declining sugar industry, the nation's affairs could be summed up in one word — OIL.

American capital, through the firms Texaco, Amoco, Aramoco and W.R. Grace, dominates the nation's oil and natural gas resources and the by-products. Billions of American dollars are invested and enormous profits are returned to the USA.

In the wake of these massive investments come a train of CIA agents and other personnel from the American state department. They can form no political party of their own. As is the case throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, they are content to run the show through any of the political parties to emerge from within the population, or through their local recruits in the trade unions, the police and the military.

In these elections, the American government will have little or no objection to the programmes and policies of any of eight political parties. To one degree or another, they all guarantee that Trinidad and Tobago remains a colony of the United States.

The ninth is the United Labour Front. Their manifesto guarantees the opposite:

"Trinago [Trinidad & Tobago] has an important role to play in the development of the New World Economic Order: we therefore commit ourselves to active involvement in this sphere with countries throughout the world which are serious about eradicating neo-colonialism, imperialism, monopoly capitalism and the trans-national corporations."

We read this within hours of our arrival, interrupted only by a passing motorcade which urges us to "vote the PNM for Peace and Stability".

We ponder on the ULF manifesto. Brave words, we thought, in a hemisphere dominated by the military might of the USA. The ULF was formed at a public rally held on February 18, 1975. At that time, workers and farmers in the Oilfield Workers Union, the Sugar Workers Union and the Cane Farmers Union were involved, each in their own struggle. The oil workers, for 147% increase in wages, the cane farmers, for the recognition of their union, and the sugar workers, for control of the sugar industry. The rally brought together 40,000 workers and farmers at the high point of a general strike and registered the unity of different sections of the working class in the formation of the ULF, under the slogan, Peace, Bread and Justice. One year later, in January 1976, the ULF was launched as a political party. Only seven months of the new experience of election campaigning lay ahead.

Tuesday 7. We are up and about and take the decision to spend the day in and around our base. We are in the Port of Spain East constituency. It is traditional PNM territory, an overwhelmingly African working class area, which has voted PNM candidates into power in four consecutive elections since 1956. We tour the area, and after three hours leg-work, it looks like a PNM victory once more.

*"Ah voting PNM because is de doctor [Dr. Williams] who give me a job. He give meh son and meh husband a job too."*

The Government employs 95% of the wage earners in this constituency.

*"Ah voting PNM because is the doctor who give me and meh family somewhere to live."*

It is an area overwhelmingly dominated by slum dwellings. The only hope of decent accommodation for many is the allocation of a flat by the government's National Housing Authority. The African working class woman, teasingly referred to as 'the big-ass brigade', forms the core of PNM support here.

*"I ent voting at all."*

This appears to be the slogan of the majority of unemployed youth and of those whose jobs are secure against competition from the unemployed.

This pattern repeats itself in some 15 constituencies in the north of the island. The ruling party is assured of support from those to whom it has granted favours. Where competition for jobs and housing is at its fiercest, support for the party in power guarantees you a job and a flat and the fact that you will keep them. To supplement the votes from this base, middle-class voters appear to be moving towards the slogan, 'Peace and Stability'.

Support for the PNM from these sections of the population is unshakeable. Yet, even within the party camp, there are few signs of confidence that a national victory is certain. Party supporters admit that the ULF is a major force.

We are off to Tunapuna, a mere 15 minutes away. It is one of the northern constituencies, bordering on the sugar belt and with its fair share of Indian farmers. The ULF bandwagon is holding a meeting in support of the local candidate. He is the son of the Anglican bishop. As we approach the meeting, a crowd of 7,000 is in chorus with the slogan — 'Close Ranks Against Them. No Votes For the PNM'. 'Let Those Who Labour Hold the Reins', screams from the banner above the platform.



We recognise on the platform, George Weekes, President General of the Oilfield Workers Trade Union. Basdeo Panday, President of the Sugar Workers Trade Union. Joe Young, President of the Transport and Industrial Workers Union. Raffique Shah is missing. He is the President of the Cane Farmers Union. The four are the de facto leaders of the ULF, all of whom have won their spurs in fierce combat against an anti-working class government.

The audience is overwhelmingly Indian — sugar workers, cane farmers and food crop farmers.

We are just in time to hear George Weekes. He mentions the struggle against American imperialism at least 12 times in his 40 minute delivery. He strikes all with his unswerving commitment to the new society. For him, parliament is a talk shop and the major struggle for liberation will take place in the communities, at the places of work and on the streets. George emphasises again that these struggles will form the basis of a new society. "*A new democracy*", is the term he uses. Contesting the elections is for him a mere tactic. We are told that George has declined to run as a candidate.

An electrifying uproar is released from the audience when Panday is introduced. In the next hour he justifies it in one of the best election campaign speeches recorded in West Indian history. He is the candidate for the Couva North constituency, one of the ten sugar constituencies. Of the 20,000 sugar workers, 99% are of Indian origin. In 1974, a rebellion within the Sugar Workers Union, against a corrupt leadership, brought Panday to power. He promptly led the negotiations to win a 100% increase in wages from Caroni Ltd.

His speech deals with every criticism levelled against the ULF.

*Our enemies say the ULF is communist*", he intones and then goes on to outline the contribution to working class struggles made by George Weekes, Raffique Shah and Joe Young. He ends by saying,

*"If what Joe, George and Raff have done makes them communist then I am glad to be a communist"*.

*"Our enemies say that trade unionists ought not to be in politics"*, continues Panday.

*"As a trade unionist"*, Panday replies, *"I have been able to negotiate 100% increase in wages."*

He could not, he says, guarantee that the worker who wants to purchase a fridge with the increase would have electricity in his home. Nor could he guarantee that the cost of the fridge would not be punishingly excessive.

*"A trade unionist cannot give those guarantees"*, he adds.

In order to be able so to do, Panday asks his audience to give the ULF political power. Whatever has been the support for the local candidate to date, this meeting certainly enhances his chances. The racial division between Indian and African workers hangs menacingly over this election. Panday spends a full 20 minutes pleading for racial unity.

The following day we look feverishly through the

national press for a report of the meeting. We find nothing. Perhaps, the Tunapuna meeting is a fluke, we need confirmation. We arrange to join Raffique Shah through five speaking engagements in the south of the island. He warns us that we will be at it for the next five hours. Raff is confident of winning the seats in the sugar belt. He confesses that he has done little campaigning in his own constituency. He is giving priority to the oil belt where every vote counts. The ULF are sure of 40% of oil workers' votes. In order to win the seven oil constituencies, they must convince a larger number of those oil workers who are spread thinly over the area. Five on-the-spot meetings reflect a strong ULF support but one suspects that 20% of the audiences are not convinced.

We pass a Tapia meeting. Tapia is the party of the university intellectuals. The speaker has no audience at all, not a single person. He is addressing the birds and the trees.

Back in the north we receive reports from Tobago. The PNM is heading for certain defeat. The Democratic Action Congress, led by the former deputy Prime Minister, is tipped to win both seats. Tobago has received little from oil revenues and has been abandoned almost to eking out an existence from subsistence farming.

Saturday 11. PNM party members are in a panic, as it becomes clearer that the ULF is gaining ground. A ULF motorcade, with literally thousands of workers, has thrown them off course. In the next 36 hours they launch what could only be described as a vicious racial campaign.

*"The Coolies [the Indians] going to take over."*

*"The coolies using George Weekes to get into power and when Panday is Prime Minister he going to take all we houses and all we jobs."*

*"You want to live under a coolie Prime Minister?"*

This epidemic raged through both northern and southern constituencies. We talked to Africans who appeared perfectly sane a few hours before, now caught up in the hysteria of racial invective.

Polling day arrives and the superiority of the PNM election machinery is in evidence. The old, the blind, the deaf, the infirm are herded into party vehicles and off to the polls. The ULF trails far behind in this respect. They have no election machinery worth speaking of. They have at their disposal trade unionists from their respective unions together with helpers in a loose coalition. Having declared themselves a political party a mere seven months before, this is to be expected.

And now for the results. The local television and radio stations bring the results as they come in. A bevy of political pundits give us of their comments between returns from different constituencies. It is highly impressive, well organised.

They bring us news of a PNM victory. The ruling party has won 24 of the 36 seats with the support of 29% of the registered electorate. They won all but one of the northern constituencies and took the oil belt by a narrow margin, hard pressed as they were by the ULF. The ten sugar constituencies went to the ULF and the rebellion of Tobagonians dislodged the two traditional PNM candidates in favour of the local







## TROTTER DEFENCE COMMITTEE BANNED

Desmond Trotter, the young Dominican political activist who won a reprieve from the death penalty, still remains in prison.

His reprieve was granted by the Mercy Committee, appointed by the Dominican government to review the cases of prisoners sentenced to death.

The Mercy Committee had no other alternative. An international movement unearthed evidence that Trotter was framed by the police for the murder of an American tourist.

The main prosecution witness, Camella Francis testified at the trial to the effect that Trotter confided in her that he had killed a white man. Camella later signed an affidavit in the presence of an international delegation that her testimony was entirely false and had been prompted by the police.

The Trotter Defence Committee has been continuing with the fight to win a free pardon for Desmond and consequently his release from prison. To this end they named November 20 as a day of solidarity with Desmond Trotter. A rally was planned in Roseau, the capital city, and among those invited to address the rally was the Guyanese political activist, Walter Rodney.

The Dominican government responded immediately with a ban on Rodney. He could not enter the country, they said. The government went further, they banned the rally and referred to the organisers as subversives. The organisers decided to proceed with the rally and changed the venue to the banks of the Roseau river. Armed policemen confronted the group as the rally was in progress. The audience proceeded into the river where they were determined to continue their meeting. Baton blows, and tear gas exploded among those present and 13 arrests were made. Defendants were charged with being involved in an unlawful assembly.

On the Monday following, the Premier, Patrick John, announced that the Trotter case was now closed and the defence committee banned from pursuing any activities aimed at campaigning for the release of Trotter.

Letters of Protest to Patrick John,  
Premier,  
Roseau, Dominica.

## GUYANA: DAYCLEAN UNDER ATTACK

Another member of the left-wing Working Peoples Alliance in Guyana, Eusi-Kwayana, has been served with summonses under the Publications and Newspapers Act. This Act requires anyone who publishes a newspaper in Guyana to lodge a bond of \$5,000 with the government. All particulars relating to those involved with the printing and publishing must also be submitted for government scrutiny. This the WPA has refused to do.

Formed in November '74, the WPA is made up of four political organisations: the African society for Cultural Relations with Independent Africa, (ASCRIA), the Working Peoples Vanguard Party (WPVP), the Indian Political Revolutionary Associates (IPRA) and RATOON. This combination of African and Indian political organisations represents a break from the racial politics which continues to divide the country.

The WPA's newsheet, *Dayclean*, has been singled out for attack by the PNC government for sometime now. The summonses under the Act state that Kwayana, "knowingly and wilfully printed *Dayclean* (Vol II No 5) containing certain remarks or observations on public matters without having executed or delivered the bond as required". *Dayclean* remains the only truly independent paper in opposition to the Forbes Burnham government.

The current charges against Kwayana represent the latest moves in the campaign to silence the paper. Since the formation of the Alliance the newsheet has consistently attacked the government for its anti-working class activities.

In 1974, before the public launching of the Alliance, the first copies of *Dayclean*, which had been printed in Trinidad, were seized and burnt by Guyana's customs officers. Early in '75, a former member of the Alliance, Moses Bhagwan, faced a total of 16 charges under the Publications and Newspapers Act. Bhagwan was subsequently convicted and fined a total of \$8,400. In April of this year, armed security police carried out a series of raids on the homes of prominent members of the organisation. Police seized typewriters, stencils and other printing material.

Protesting the charges against Kwayana, the Working People's Alliance has launched a campaign to fight the case. In their published statement they say: "Persecution of the WPA forms part of an assault on those who try to confront the pressing problems of our day." Kwayana has refused to appear in court. The Alliance proposed a boycott of the courts, recognising the fact that "the courts of Guyana, still colonial in form, are being used as instruments of political repression". The Alliance sees the boycott of the courts as highlighting the political issues of the case and exposing the abuses carried out daily by the PNC government.



## DEAR COUNCILLOR WINTERFLOOD.....

On November 5, the *East London Advertiser* ran a report saying that the London Borough of Tower Hamlets proposed to buy all the properties in Varden Street, Nelson Street and Turner Street, London E.1. London Hospital are the owners. It was further reported that the LBTH had demanded the houses with vacant possession. They are set for demolition in a few years time.

Vacant possession would mean that hundreds of families who have occupied the properties, for years in some cases, would be evicted by court order granted to the London Hospital.

Following the report, the Bengali Housing Action Group, with twenty member families in Varden and Nelson Street, wrote to the council demanding that the council withdraws their condition of vacant possession.

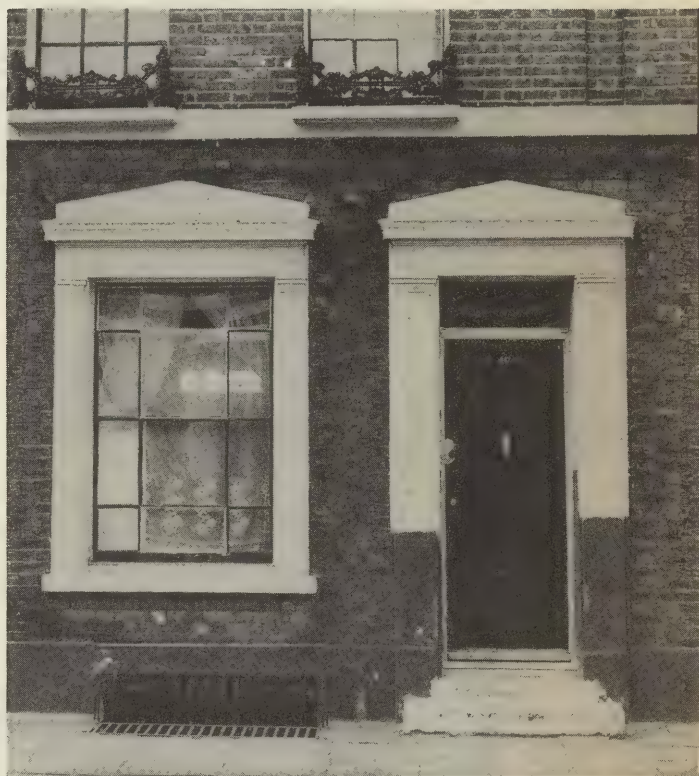
*Dear Councillor Winterflood,*

You will recall meeting a delegation from our group on August 2 of this year. I wish to refer to the reply that the council sent us as a result of this meeting, dated August 26 and signed by Mr Wolkind. I refer especially to clause (c) of that reply.

At the time of the meeting you stated that Varden Street houses were not owned by the LBTH and that you were therefore not willing to talk about the occupants of these houses. We now read, in the *East London Advertiser* of November 5 that your council is buying the houses in Varden, Nelson and Turner Streets and demanding vacant possession of these from the vendors who are the trustees of the London Hospital. The *Advertiser* implies that this is a policy decision by your borough committee.

At our meeting we made it clear that we represent the Asian families who live in several of the houses on Varden Street and Nelson Street. We regard it as the council's responsibility to a) refrain from such action as would make families in the borough homeless and b) provide for the housing needs of all families who have lived and worked in the borough for years, regardless of their race or colour.

We are aware also that the council bought the houses in Parfett Street from a private firm and has offered the white "squatters" licenses to remain in the properties which they have at different times occupied.



Julian Stapleton.



# EAST END NOTES

We regard it as a breach of faith on your part to begin negotiations with our group and then unilaterally demand that the London Hospital render several families homeless in the process of selling properties to a state agency financed by the rate payer. This especially so as you stated in your memorandum of our last meeting that we would continue our dialogue as between the council and a group representing the Asians of the borough.

We ask you therefore to withdraw your demand for "vacant possession", considering all that this would entail. We also ask you to meet representatives of our group so that you may consider our just demands and that we may know your further intentions.

Farrukh Dhondy,  
Secretary,  
Bengali Housing Action Group.

## COUNCIL REPLIES

*Dear Mr Dhondy,*

I have been asked by Councillor Winterflood to write and acknowledge your recent letter to him concerning the occupants of the houses in Varden Street. He has asked me to say that he is looking into the matter and will, no doubt, have to report to the appropriate committee of the council thereon.

I will, therefore, write to you again as soon as possible.

Jack Wolkind,  
Chief Executive.



**We shall Stay, We shall Fight, Self Defence Is Our Right!**

*On November 7, a demonstration was called against racial attacks in the East End of London by the Anti Racist Committee of Asians in East London.*

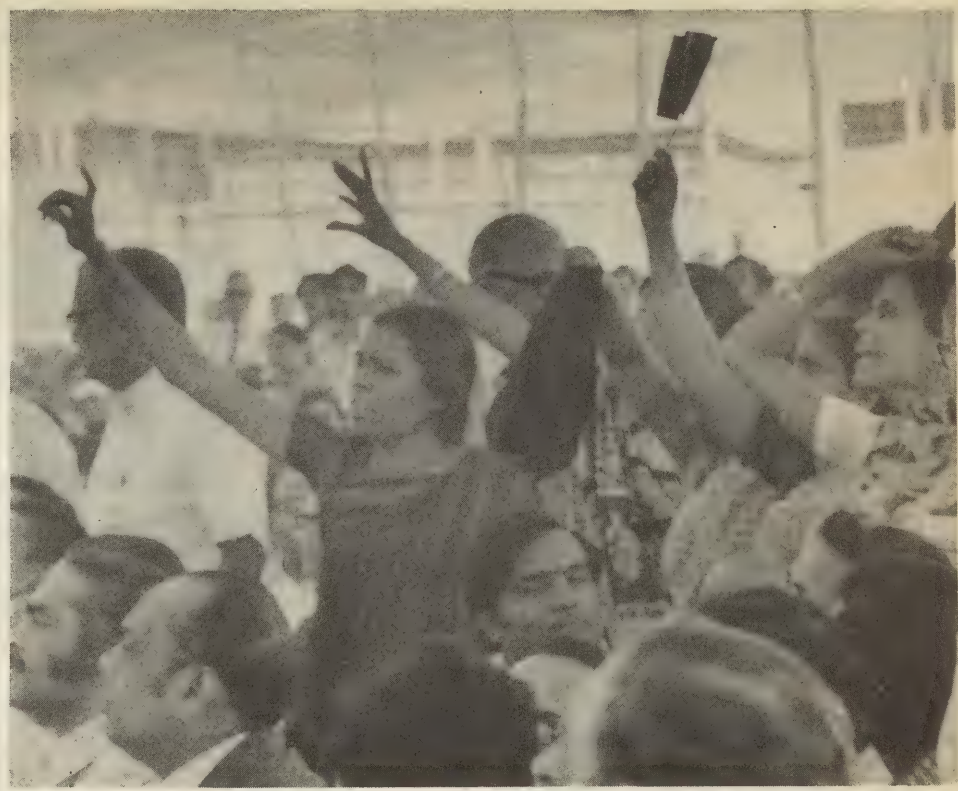
*It ended in violence when members of the National Front provoked the demonstrators.*



*Tony Bock,*



## BONUS STRUGGLE IN INDIA



All over India industrial workers are taking action around the demand for bonus payments. The bonus, paid to all industrial workers who call it a 'deferred wage', is an extra month's pay in the year. It is usually paid on the eve of some Hindu festivity. In 1972, the Congress government was compelled by industrial action to pass a law making this bonus compulsory.

In 1975, Indira Gandhi used the state of emergency to deny the bonus to workers. She passed the Bonus Act which states that firms which made no profits would pay no bonus. The act also put a ceiling of 4% on the bonus to be paid out by those firms which showed a profit.

On October 15, hundreds of textile mills in Bombay's industrial inner city were closed down by workers on unofficial strike. They were demanding that bonus be paid in full. In 30 of the mills of Parel and Lalbagh, the slums of the Western Indian industrial capital, the strike was total and lasted three days.

A week after the beginning of the agitation in Bombay, the textile owners announced, in some of the mills which had declared a profit, that a bonus of 4 - 7.5% would be paid. Most of the mills announced they had made a loss and, in this year of rising prices, no bonus would be paid. This allows the owners to cut their wage bill by 10 to 20%. Committees of workers responded by circulating handbills with a balance sheet of the company's financial affairs, showing the large profits the mills had made. The day after the bonus was announced, 75,000 workers of 15 mills went on strike.

Under the emergency regulations, workers cannot hold strike meetings. The strikes were organised by underground committees operating on the shop-floor. Handbills were given out in the whole district, slogans were painted on the walls and badges demanding the

bonus payment (withheld this year for the first time) were worn by large numbers of defiant workers.

Those industrial unions of textile workers, which are not affiliated to the Congress Party or to the Communist Party of India (Moscow), initiated the action by calling a 'bonus week' from October 6 to 15. The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), the union group of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), joined with the other Socialist Party unions to organise the protest which was boycotted at first by the Congress and CPI high command in the unions.

The success of the protest and strikes was such that the ruling party activists and organisers in the mills openly declared their support for it, and announced that they would not ask workers to appear on the shift on strike days.

This show of power and defiance of the emergency regulations has not been confined to Bombay. The bonus issue has fielded a mass movement all over India, notably in West Bengal where textile workers, film industry workers, plantation workers, electricians, steel and heavy industry workers have been joined by the hard hit white collar unions in staging escalating protests, from petitions, badges and slogans, to walk-out strike action.

Through the bonus agitation, committees of workers have emerged to coordinate the high level of organisation that is needed to combat the emergency's restrictions, censorship, police surveillance and industrial spies. These committees, and the network of them which is crystallising like a web over the industrial centres of India, have been the leadership of the bonus struggle and threaten to take it to its conclusion. Already the Congress government has had to concede the bonus. In several states they have asked employers to break the emergency law and pay out the demanded wage, 'deferred' for now, but not for long.



## TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: AFTER THE ELECTIONS

"Prior to the elections (in December 1975) we of the New Beginning Movement (NBM) suggested to the ULF leadership, and again in March 1976, this time to ULF as a whole, that the COSSABO's (Conference of Shop Stewards and Branch Officers of the Oil Workers Trade Union, Sugar Workers Union, Transport Industrial Workers Union and Island Wide Cane Farmers Trade Union) be established as a permanent structure (form) and be broadened to include workers from WASA, TELCO, CANNINGS, etc., civil servants, organised sections of the unemployed, project workers, food-crop farmers, housewives, students, etc., so as to make the experience an experience of the broadest sections of the whole population. Arising out of this we saw the emergence of ULF Committees, Councils and Assemblies throughout the length and breadth of the country, all of which could then have been culminated into an "alternative government". . . . .

. . . The ULF must reconvene the COSSABO at once. It must initiate and build and institutionalise Committees, Councils, Assemblies, Mass Meetings, etc., all over the country. NBM says, cover the country with popular organisations, relative to peoples daily activities and demands. Then pull all this, together with the COSSABO, into a permanent functioning alternative government — the Conference of Shop Stewards, Branch Officers and Peoples Delegates. . . .

. . . The greatest weakness of the ULF is its confusion of the Party with the Mass Movement. The nucleus of the Organised Mass Movement (COSSABO) was halted and the title "Party" was attached to almost the very same content that was/is the Mass Movement. So logically we end up with neither an Organised Mass Movement nor an Organised Vanguard. If this confusion of concepts is not cleared up, ULF shall not move one foot in any fundamentally new direction. Far less will we be able to establish any alternative government that is an alternative."

**New Beginning Movement.**

The Trinidad and Tobago elections have unleashed a range of comments in the post election period. Below we reprint a cross section of these.



**BALISIER FLOWER**  
... (PNM)



**BELL**  
... (SDLP)



**OPEN BOOK**  
... (DAC)



**TAPIA HOUSE**  
... (TAPIA)



**BEARING COCONUT Tree** ... (WINP)



**FALCON IN FLIGHT**  
... (UFP)



**LAPPE** ...  
(LAP)



**FLAMING TORCH**  
... (DLP)



**BROKEN CHAIN**  
... (ULF)

"The PNM won the election but they know that a paltry 29% of the total registered electorate, is not a mandate to govern. They are bound to be worried about the fact that, in spite of all the propaganda to get people to register and turn out to the polls, over 50,000 people did not register and 45% of those registered did not vote.

They know that many of the votes they got were not votes for PNM but votes against communism or against the threat of an Indian takeover, as they were able to represent the possibility of a ULF victory to some misguided

Africans.

Given this situation then, given the absence of any no-vote campaign, given that the vote represents all 36 constituencies, they are worse off than they were as a 26% government in 1971. They know too that it is the opposition that defeated itself, with a good deal of help from a biased press, particularly biased against the ULF.

*The results show clearly too that there is still a strong current against conventional politics in the society. No one can be left with any doubt that the society is heading for serious crisis again.*



# BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

All the developments during the election period as well as the results have left NJAC convinced that our decision to maintain our stand against conventional politics and not to participate in the elections, was correct.

We will continue to be a revolutionary force fighting with our people in the troubled times ahead."

**National Joint Action Committee.**

"Weighing heavily in the PNM's favour was its well-gear'd political machine, its campaign for "continued" stability and prosperity (the country has been experiencing an unprecedented oil boom), its clever manipulation of the mass media and, above all, the political clout of Dr Eric Williams who brought the country through Independence and into its new Republic status. In the 1976 elections the 65 year-old PNM Political Leader more than earned the triumphant title given him by his loyal supporters, "William The Conqueror".

But the victorious and aging Doctor faces no end of problems over the next five years. In spite of the new flush of money available to the Treasury, the Government is yet to make a dent on the intractable unemployment problem, involving some 80,000 people without jobs, 52,000 of them between the volatile ages of 15 and 24. Added to that, income inequality has been growing and the emergence of a new and grasping oligarchy will sharpen this problem in the near future."

**Caribbean Contact.**

"What's with the labour scene? Why the epidemic of industrial unrest? Is there something wrong with the conciliation machinery? Or are the power lines being redrawn in the wake of the September general election?

We have already had a damaging strike against BWIA all because a section of the union disagreed with the promotion of one of their colleagues on the establishment. True the strike collapsed, but it should never have been in the first place.

Now the government has been forced to use the mailed fist to stop the postmen holding up the Christmas mail over griev-

ances which the Attorney-General said in Parliament on Friday were imaginary, or were matters which could have been handled in a more sensible manner by going through the correct procedure.

And so it has been with the complete stoppage of work on the important gasline project, and the union is now asking the government to withdraw the contract from the construction company and give it to a local firm.

So it was last week with the firemen who announced they would work to rule, which presumably meant they would fight fires only and not do any of their auxiliary duties no matter how important.

So it was also with the junior doctors at the San Fernando General Hospital who instituted a work to rule procedure because an air conditioning unit was faulty and needed to be repaired. They resumed normal duties when it was fixed.

We have had the Water Authority workers withdrawing their labour as a complaint against working conditions; and port workers brought all work on the docks to a standstill because they do not like their chief security officer.

What has gone wrong? Why this sudden deterioration in the industrial relations climate over such a short period of time? One would hardly believe that just over a month ago we had a general election that gave a definite mandate to the party in power and set up an opposition with a true voice for the first time in five years.

The total effect of all these happenings certainly is to hamper the economic and industrial climate in the country. And even though we are a rich country by Commonwealth Caribbean standards and for the time being money is no problem, we cannot afford more of this.

Let us appeal to employers and trade unions. Lockouts and strikes are unnecessary. The conciliation machinery is there. It should be used wisely so that in the weeks and months ahead production and productivity may be given the highest priority."

**Express Editorial (National Newspaper) Sunday, November 7, 1976.**

"It is my opinion that Tapia lost the election in that crucial period long before the appointed day of September 13. Week after week the Tapia newspaper kept attacking the leadership of the ULF, branding them as opportunists and manipulators, the most notorious headline being "Texaco, Williams and Weekes must Go"

Now whether or not Weekes and Panday are opportunist or manipulators is not the point, and I can assure you that such persons are to be found in every camp. What is notable is that the timing of these criticisms was such that it had the effect of damaging the cause of the workers in that struggle. Because of the credibility Tapia enjoyed in the country, the party made it much easier for the Government to crush the strikers.

The OWTU in particular saw Tapia's salvos as an act of betrayal. In a statement delivered at the Town Hall in San Fernando, Lloyd Best argued that inasmuch as the Government was allowing the oil companies to get away with enormous profits which rightly belonged to the country, it would make sense if the union could retain a bigger slice in wages.

He therefore supported the 147% pay claim on certain specific conditions, the most important of which was that the union should use the money to close the inequality gap between workers in the industry, and also devote some to closing the gap in the country as a whole.

When therefore Best was reported as saying afterwards that the fact that the OWTU called for 147% was an indication that they did not want a settlement, many felt that he had flattered only to deceive. . . . .

... Tapia has consistently refrained from engaging in spontaneous politics in which crowds are spell-bound by oratory in the square. The entire history of the Caribbean people, from the introduction of slavery to now, has been one of confrontation, resistance and revolt. In the modern period almost exactly every 20 years dating from Alfred Richard's Workingmen's Association in 1897 to Cipriani in 1917, Butler in 1937 and Eric Williams in 1956 it has always been the hero and the crowd. The Tapia message is that every man must count, must take up his bed and walk.

This outlook on politics has earned for the Tapia House Movement the criticism of being aloof in an intellectual ivory tower. Perhaps Lennox Pierre is right in saying that the only politics that he knows of is street politics.

Tapia might have been right or wrong. But politics is not necessarily about that. Trust is the crucial criterion. Most often power is not on the side of right. In the final analysis the electorate wants to know whether on balance it can trust Williams or Panday or Best and clearly, the bulk of the Indians and abstaining African youth did not trust us. Williams 28th generation did not let him down."

**Syl Lowhar — Tapia Member.**



# REVIEWS

## "I'm Here"

An Inner London Education Authority TV Access Film.

Last month, interested teachers and community workers were invited to the preview of a film about Asian teenagers in the East End. The film was made by the educational television service of the Inner London Education Authority. The 20-minute reel shows Abdul, a 14 year-old Bengali, and his friends engaged in some of their daily activities and talking about their experiences. The producers stress that Abdul himself decided what he wanted the film to be. A local teacher approached the local Asians who appear in the film to get their permission, which was obtained after some initial hostility and suspicion.

The film is in colour, and very well produced. It concentrates on those aspects of Abdul's daily life which are governed by his membership of the Asian community and his acceptance of the traditional values and attitudes of that community.

First, we see a bird's-eye view of the area around Brick Lane, the heart of the Asian community — the contrast between the maze of narrow streets of derelict houses and the shabbiest version of their high-rise concrete modern equivalent. Abdul and his friends half-heartedly kick a football around an otherwise empty playground. They introduce themselves — where they come from, how long they've lived in England. The camera follows Abdul through and around Brick Lane, giving us an impression of the high spots of Asian cultural life as it goes. Abdul buys Halal meat from the local shop. He eats a curry with his friends in one of the popular cafes on Brick Lane.

They are shown eating with their left hands, a fact to which a young Asian member of the audience reacted to at first with incredulity and then with anger. A group of children are seen performing the ritual Islamic washing ceremony before prayer in the local mosque. Older Asian viewers felt that this could be seen by the elders of the community as a gross invasion of spiritual privacy. One of Abdul's friends stresses the importance of religion to the community. This concern with the abstract and aesthetic is further demonstrated by a view of Abdul taking one of his frequent visits to the almost deserted Whitechapel Art Gallery.

Abdul does not have much free time. After cooking for his uncle (his parents had recently to return to Bangladesh to care for a sick relative), he goes to school, then to the mosque and later he has to earn his living by working in the evenings in one of the tailoring sweatshops which provide the majority of Asians with their only access to a wage in the East End.

The boys comment on themselves, their interests and their aspirations. Abdul seems to want us to feel sorry for him and to admire his resigned and philosophical approach to the problems he encounters as an Asian in Britain, and his attempts to overcome his sense of unrest by searching for a kind of spiritual fulfilment. The film evokes this response very successfully. Most of the audience were "very moved" by what they had seen and felt that it would promote sympathy, understanding and respect for this community which is seen as retaining its cultural isolation.



Tony Bock.



What do teachers hope to achieve by this increased understanding? There are certainly some teachers who hope to make a name for themselves by becoming "experts" on this or that immigrant community, able to represent it where it has not seized the opportunity to represent itself. The others, inspired by them, fail to see their own irrelevance to the dynamics of the systematic oppression of blacks inside schools and outside. It is a struggle which can only be fought and won by blacks themselves. Teachers will continue to be let down by educational theories which see the blacks' refusal to work in schools as a product of language difficulties and culture shock, problems which can be overcome by the application of the right teaching materials.

The producers of "I'm Here" emphasise, that Abdul makes no claim to represent Asian youth, and that we are seeing a personal account. What the producers have managed to do is produce a vision of Abdul's nostalgia and of an ingrowing Asian sub-culture. "I'm Here" surprisingly ignores the fact that the young Asians of the East End have very emphatically and collectively said not only "we're here", but, "we're here to stay".

The camera turns away from the relationship between black and white in this most racially unsettled area of the country. It turns away from the partnership that the Asian youth have forged in their fight against their schools, their work, their prospects and what is popularly thought of as their culture. The film is about the softness of the survivor. To represent Asian youth in the East End (and if it doesn't the film has no educational purpose and should be shown to dilettantes at the ICA), it would have to incorporate the hardness that is emerging.

## CARIBBEAN DIALOGUE

Caribbean Dialogue is published by New Beginning Movement in Toronto, Canada and distributed in Britain by *Race Today* Collective Association.

Caribbean Dialogue is an information service that links the struggles of workers, peasants and students in the Caribbean and Caribbean workers in the metropolitan centres.

Below is a list of back issues which are available from our office at 40p each, including postage and packing.

<i>Aug/Sept '75</i>	Workers and Farmers vs Gairy State: Manley's Democratic Socialism: The Black Community in Britain.
<i>October</i>	Unemployment and the Unemployed.
<i>Nov/Dec</i>	Thesis on Liberation: Afro-Caribbean Liberation Movement in Antigua: Jagan on critical support: Peoples Progressive Party — Guyana.
<i>January '76</i>	Crisis in the Schools. Immigrants and the School System in Toronto.
<i>March</i>	Fascism on the Rise — Jamaica.
<i>April/May</i>	The emergence and potential of the ULF — Trinidad and Tobago.
<i>June/July</i>	Dominica— Conditions and struggles in a small agrarian economy.

Subscription Rates: Europe and Caribbean £5.00. Britain £4.00.

**East End At Your Feet** by Farrukh Dhondy, a member of the *Race Today* Collective. Published by Macmillan Education — Topliners Series, 1976.

*East End At Your Feet* is a collection of six short stories written primarily for secondary school students. They tell of the lives of a generation of Asian teenagers who were born and/or schooled in Britain. Told at times with humour, each story centres around the adolescent preoccupations, desires, conflicts and struggles for independence against the traditions, values and restrictions, not only of white society, but of Asian society as well. We meet amongst others;

Pushy, who is mortified by her pimples and hides from her parents, the endless jars of face cream that never work . . . . Cashy, who, forced by the death of his father to return to India, yearns for fish and chips, his East End mates, and, above all, a game of football . . . . Raju, who is too shy to approach his heart's desire, a white schoolmate . . . . Bhupinder, whose sister resists all his attempts to carry out the duty to protect her from an 'undesirable' Asian school gang leader . . . .

That is not to say that the author portrays individuals who have rejected their Asian background; that once again we witness the rebirth of colonial mentality in this generation. We meet characters who bear no relation to the helpless victims, caught in a no man's land between the cultures of Asia and Britain. They are, instead, a new generation that spans both — confidently taking what they want from each. Dhondy allows us to understand the phenomenon that we witnessed in the spring and summer months of this year — the thousands of young Asians who mobilised in their thousands against the racial violence and hostility against them from sections of the white population. The slogan — *Come What May We Are Here To Stay*.

Of the greatest importance is the authors ability to relate the experience of this section of the community as a people on the move — and thereby challenges all the previous analyses of sociologists, and the like. In this way he makes this book more valuable than all the political and sociological analyses that have accumulated at our feet.

Leila Hassan,  
Race Today Collective.



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